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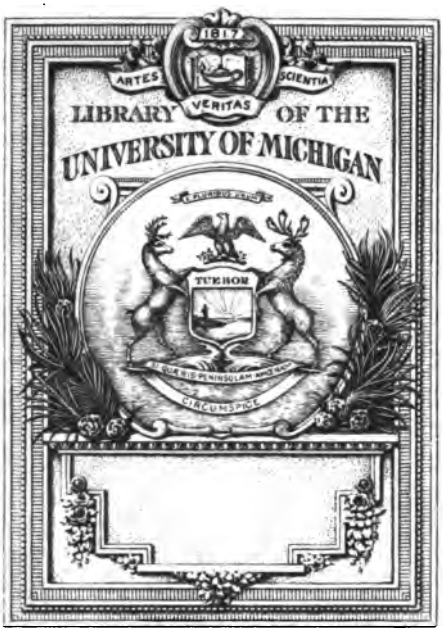
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# THE TROUBADOURS:

## Their Loves and their Lyrics.

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AND PARLIAMENT STREET

# THE TROUBADOURS:

## Their Loves and their Lyrics;

*WITH REMARKS ON THEIR INFLUENCE, SOCIAL AND LITERARY.*

BY

JOHN RUTHERFORD.

LONDON:
SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15, WATERLOO PLACE.
1873.

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PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

TO

Frederick Greenwood, Esq.

I INSCRIBE THIS MY FIRST BOOK,

WITH A PLEASURE THAT WOULD BE GREATER WERE I AT

LIBERTY TO ACKNOWLEDGE MY OBLIGATIONS

AND TO EXPRESS MY FEELINGS.

JOHN RUTHERFORD.

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* These chapters are reprinted from the "Cornhill Magazine."

## *PRINCIPAL AUTHORITIES.*

AMONG THE ITALIANS. — The Earlier Poets and their Commentators, Bastaro, Tiraboschi, Crescembini, &c.

AMONG THE FRENCH.—Nostradamus, Raynouard, Fauriel, St. Palaye, Roquefort, Paulmy, Le Grand d'Aussy, Vich and Vaissette, Ruffi, Papon, Villeneuve, &c.

# PREFACE.

In writing the following pages it has been my purpose to give a picture of the Troubadours during the twelfth century—the period when we find them in their prime. Previous to the century named they are enveloped in mist; subsequent thereto they hurry rapidly to extinction. To hunt them through the one, and to trace them, step by step, through the stages of the other, are tasks which I have not attempted.

It will be seen that I give no minute references. For this omission I have my reasons. I think that the more usual custom has been carried to excess. In these days of great libraries and literary facilities, and when it is so easy for every one to go to original sources for what he needs, minute references are of little value to an honest student. My plan, I may add, is not new; it is as old as the troubadours, having been recommended by Gancelm Faudet, and for very good reason, in the following line :—

"Folg es neis qi diz toz sos vers."

As to the troubadours themselves, most of their remains have been given to the world, by the French of the last

and the present centuries. But the Italians, who were the first to study Provençal literature, did much to lighten the labours of their successors in this study, by pointing out where every important manuscript relating thereto was to be found; by drawing up grammars and preparing vocabularies of the Provençal language; and by accumulating illustrations without number of the poetry from whence their own was so largely derived.

JOHN RUTHERFORD.

# THE TROUBADOURS

## THE LAND OF SONG

IN the twelfth century the Langue d'Oc extended from the Po to the Ebro, and from the Mediterranean to the basins of the Loire and of the higher Rhone. The principal dialects spoken over this stretch of country—that is, the Piedmontese, the Provençal, the Gascon, and the Catalan—were mutually intelligible. They were used indifferently by the troubadours, and often in the same song. There exists a canzon by Rambaud of Vaquieras in which all four are employed, together with a fifth—the French of the same date.

Politically, the country of the troubadours was divided into six principal portions. On the eastern extremity was Savoy, lying on both sides of the Alps. Next came Provence, situated east of the Rhone. Contiguous thereto, and skirting the Mediterranean, was the county of Toulouse. Then followed Aquitaine with its dependencies, extending northwards to the Loire and eastwards to the Bay of Biscay. And in Spain there were the kingdoms of Navarre and Aragon; the latter including the ancient county of Barcelona, ruled by branches of the same family.

In 1152 Aquitaine passed to the Plantagenets by the marriage of its heiress, Eleanor, to Henry II. of England. The Counts of Toulouse had so often mixed blood with the royal race of Aragon that they might

fairly be accounted a branch thereof. As for Provence, its atmosphere seemed fatal to reigning houses from first to last. After transference to various native families in dower, and after partitions and reunions perplexing to follow, but remarkably prolific of pretensions to its sovereignty, it became a possession of the house of Aragon in the beginning of the twelfth century, by the union of the Provençal heiress with the Pyrenean sovereign. He left the county to a younger son, whose successor dying without heirs, Provence reverted again to the crown. This was in 1166, and for thirty years thereafter kingdom and county were ruled by the same monarch. Then, in 1196, there was a final partition, Aragon going to the elder brother and Provence to the younger. This new race of counts died out in the second generation, and, in 1245, its possessions were transferred, partly by force and partly by marriage, to the house of Capet, which had already gained Toulouse in much the same way. Savoy, the sixth great division of the Langue d'Oc, was ruled as a fief of the German Empire by a family possessing more vitality and displaying more consistent ability than any that has ever reigned in Europe.

The French provinces of the Langue d'Oc owed fealty to the king who ruled in Paris. But all through the twelfth century this fealty was never more than nominal. The Spanish kingdoms were independent; and through his relations with Toulouse and Provence, the King of Aragon exercised hardly less political and much more social influence over the Land of Song than the powerful Plantagenets. Holding from one or other of the princes named, but chiefly from those of Aquitaine, were the counts of Foix and Narbonne, and the powerful barons of the French frontier—as the

Dauphins of Auvergne, the Princes of Orange, the Counts of la March and Rodez, the Tallyrands, Turennes, etc.

Circumstances combined to render the Langue d'Oc exceptionally prosperous at the period of which we write. Eastwards the policy of Gregory VII., closely adhered to by a succession of able popes, concentrated the attention of the German emperors on Italy. In the North the formidable opposition of the Norman princes furnished the kings in Paris with ample occupation. And their endless apprehensions of, and as endless wars with the Moors, kept the monarchs of the Peninsula always fronting to the West and the South. Thus the Langue d'Oc was long exempt from the terrible devastations that always followed mediæval wars of invasion. And thus, too, the considerable number of municipalities which had survived the inroads of the barbarians and the overthrow of the Roman Empire, were enabled to recover some portion of their former prosperity. Indeed, in the twelfth century the cities of the Langue d'Oc appear to have been more flourishing than their Italian rivals. Their size may be inferred from the fact that the numbers slaughtered in Beziers, a city of by no means the first class, by the crusaders of de Montfort, have been estimated as high as sixty thousand—a number surpassing the population of London at the same period—and not lower than fifteen thousand—a number greater than that tenanting York, then the second city in England. These cities carried on extensive manufactures; the saddles and cloth of Carcasson, the leather of Toulouse, and the soap, felt, jewellery, and paper made of rags of Marseilles, were widely renowned. Their commerce was not less extensive. Marseilles, the Mediterranean port of the Langue

d'Oc, maintained a navy of its own and representatives in all the important marts of the day. There was hardly a city in the Levant in which its merchants had not their quarters. It held and garrisoned important strategic points along its own coast. And it made treaties on its own account with various governments. Beaucire, with its neighbour Tarascon, on both sides of the Rhone, was the principal scene of south-western exchange. Some of the principal devices of modern finance, as banking and bills of exchange, were known and employed by the Provençals before the Italians. The like may be said of the customs which form the basis of all maritime legislation, which were adopted from the Provençals and Catalans by the Genoese, Sicilians, Venetians, etc., and copied by the northern mariners, under the various titles of codes of Oleron, Wisbey, etc. Indeed, at this date the seamen of the Langue d'Oc had no rivals on the waters. The greatest name in the naval annals of the Middle Ages is that of the Catalan admiral, Roger d'Loria, who is, perhaps, the only seaman of any age deserving to be ranked with Nelson.

In point of government, the Provençal cities were more favoured than any others of the day. They elected their own magistrates, and were ruled according to well ascertained customs and strictly defined laws. The authority of the sovereign prince within their bounds was very limited. He could exercise therein none of those arbitrary rights which under the names of *Tolte*, purveyance, etc., were so grievously felt everywhere else. The dues owing to him were rigidly fixed and moderate in the extreme; and his judges were restrained to the decision of causes, in which the State had an interest. Then the Provençal cities had the

right of admitting country-dwellers to citizenship, of defending them against aggressive barons, and of avenging their wrongs, sword in hand. Nor was this right of defence and vengeance allowed to rust unused. One of the Viscounts of Beziers, having allowed some of his knights to outrage a citizen of the town from whence he derived his title, was slain at the very foot of the altar by the victim and some of his fellows. And the people of Avignon having captured, in an ambuscade, an enemy of their city—that same Prince of Orange of whom some anecdotes are told elsewhere—they actually flayed him alive.

In consequence of the power of the cities, the middle classes of the Langue d'Oc enjoyed unusual privileges. A merchant was accorded the same social rank as one of the smaller barons, and allowed to receive the honour of knighthood. Farther north, this honour was strictly confined to men of noble birth. A count of Champagne was sharply reproved by his sovereign for conferring it on a routier. And any northern routier known to have gained the dignity by fraud or favour, was liable to have his gilded spurs hacked from his heels by the executioner, or, in lack of that unpleasant official, by the meanest servant in the princely household. The privilege of knighthood was greatly valued by the plebeians of the Langue d'Oc, and was one of those to which they clung most tenaciously when French domination was employed in reducing the South to the same feudal level as the rest of France. In an agreement formed between the Capetian Count of Toulouse and his subjects, in 1251, it is stipulated that "the honourable citizens who had been accustomed to live as knights were still to enjoy their privileges." And in a protest against princely encroachment, drawn up and

signed, in 1298, by the people of Beaucire, it is stated that it was the usage and custom, from time immemorial, for the burgesses to receive the belt and other marks of knighthood from the hands of nobles and barons, and from those of archbishops and bishops, without asking leave of any prince." The same custom, it may be added, was not peculiar to Beaucire, but common all over the South.

The cities being thus free and favoured, it follows that the country could not have been the scene of such tyranny on one side, or of such slavery on the other, as were to be witnessed elsewhere. Old French lawyers admit that Provence was exceptionally abundant in free men—an admission meaning very much when it drops from such staunch partisans of feudal institutions as were the said writers. The farmers were, to a great extent, free and independent; and to this a certain custom, widely practised among the nobles, tended much. It was usual for a dying baron to divide his lands equally among his sons; and in this way a moderate estate might come to be frittered away among ten or a dozen different holders, in the course of a few generations. Of this the biographers of the troubadours supply repeated instances. Guy of Uzes, his two brothers, and his cousin were equal sharers in the small remnant of the ancestral estate; Raymond of Miravals* found his possessions limited to a fourth of the lands whose name he bore; and these subdivisions had so greatly reduced the possessions of the house of Marveil,† that their last owner, the father of the troubadour Arnaud, was compelled, by sheer poverty, to sell them. The sale and purchase of lands, which the vicissitudes

* There are a dozen Miravals in Southern France; the one here mentioned lies in the department of the Aude.

† In the Dordogne.

in the lives of the troubadours show to have been common, is another proof of the extraordinary degree of liberty, for the period, that prevailed in the Langue d'Oc. One consequence of this subdivision of lands was the swelling of the ranks of the troubadours with recruits of high birth and spirit as high, things which had great effect on the bold character of Provençal song. Another and even more important consequence was—that the smaller landowners were all allied to the best families in the country, and must, therefore, have been proportionably sturdy and self-asserting. A third consequence was—in part that is—the system of gallantry which characterised the country. The greater houses would shrink from the diminution of consequence attending these subdivisions, and take measures to preserve their estates undivided in the hands of the eldest born. Thus the younger sons would be condemned to the state in which the younger sons of noble Italian houses were to be found only the other day—the state of the cavalier servente.

Between the rivalry of the traders and the independence of the farmers, the powers and pretensions of the nobles of the Langue d'Oc could not but have been greatly narrowed. The last possessed far fewer immunities, and were, therefore, far less exclusive than elsewhere. And as the power of the sovereign depends on the strength of the body on which he relies for support—becoming alike despotic wherever prevails either pure aristocracy or pure democracy, and diminishing to nothing wherever these antagonistic orders are equally balanced —so the Counts of Provence, Toulouse, etc., were, perhaps, the weakest, and, therefore, the mildest and most conciliating of mediæval rulers. They were unquestionably the most beloved of their subjects, which

is about the strongest proof of our assertion that could be urged.

In consequence of the unusual liberty enjoyed by the Langue d'Oc, it was the refuge of vast numbers of Jews and heretics. The former were accorded little less than equality with their Christian fellow-subjects by the princes of Aragon. They were allowed to possess lands, and to hold civic and state offices. They were permitted also to establish a college of their own at Montpellier, for the study of medicine and of rabbinical learning. When the Inquisition came in with the French crusaders, these privileges were withdrawn; but the university and its study of medicine survived to be honoured, at a later date, by the matriculation of Rabelais. The heretics were exceedingly more numerous then the Jews. We do not think that they ever formed a majority in the Langue d'Oc; but that they did form a powerful and an aggressive minority—a sort of thing that invariably succeeds in conquering the majority when left to itself—there can be no question. In its extreme phases, this heresy, like every other enthusiasm, fostered immorality. But systematic immorality is never the normal condition of the labouring masses; it is always confined to an idle few. Among the masses of the Langue d'Oc, their heretical enthusiasm had another, but still a usual effect —developing an activity of body and mind exceedingly favourable to industry and art. Thus the immigration of Jew and heretic tended to augment the intelligence and the material prosperity of the Provençals.

The twelfth century was peculiarly the age of clerical domination, and nowhere were the clergy more privileged, tyrannic, or aggressive than in the Langue d'Oc. Here the censures of the Church were inflicted with additional severity, the mob, for instance, being en-

couraged to apprise the excommunicated of his situation by hurling volleys of stone against his doors and windows; here penance was pushed to the extreme of ascetic absurdity—processions of nudities, for example, though not unknown elsewhere, being common in the South; here those singularities of anathema, the excommunication of rats, caterpillars, and other vermin were of every day occurrence; and here the higher Churchmen were installed with the strangest ceremonies and endowed with the most extraordinary privileges.

"When Monseigneur the Bishop of Cahors," writes a local historian, "takes possession of his see, the Viscount of Saissac, his principal vassal, ought to await him at the gate of the town, with his head uncovered, his right leg naked, and his right foot in a slipper. He ought to take the bridle of monseigneur's mule and lead him to the episcopal palace. While monseigneur dines the viscount ought to wait upon him, his head being still uncovered and his right leg naked; and, after dinner, the lord of Saissac is to take the buffet, which must be of vermeil, and, putting it on his mule, go his way—both mule and buffet becoming his own, in right of his service." In consequence of disputes concerning the value of this buffet, it was fixed at three thousand livres. This good bishop never said mass without taking care to see that a sword and a pair of gauntlets were placed beside the altar. This our readers will imagine rather a daring custom; but we beg to assure them that it was mild in comparison with customs observed elsewhere. For instance, the treasurer of the Cathedral of Nevers, another Provençal ecclesiastic, claimed and asserted the right of mixing with the choir booted and spurred, with his sword by his side and his hawk on his wrist. It should be observed that in

the good old times it was quite a common thing for clergymen and laymen to carry hawks to church, and that therein perches were fixed for the birds, the bishop's having the place of honour on the side of the *évangile*, and the lay lord placing his on the less dignified side of the *épître*.

The Abbot of Figeac, another very high priest of the Langue d'Oc, made his first entry into the town from whence he took his title much as did the Bishop of Cahors into the capital of his diocese, the lord of Montbrun, dressed as a harlequin, with the exception of one naked leg, meeting him in the suburbs and leading his mare to the abbey gate. And like ceremonies attended the installation of numerous other southern pastors.

Of the extent to which the clergy of the Langue d'Oc pushed their pretensions, the canons of Lyons furnish a fair sample. These clerks, all of noble birth, were counts by right of their office, and refused to follow the example of all other Catholics, by kneeling at the elevation of the Host. They considered that a slight inclination of the head was a sufficient token of respect from such lordly priests as themselves.

As might be expected, the possessors of such honours and immunities were too often of despicable character. Two of the highest rank—Raoul, Archbishop of Tours, and Eusebé, Bishop of Angers—quarrelled and exchanged excommunications, having previously exchanged foul epithets. Then Eusebé concocted some verses in very bad Latin, which he published far and wide, and wherein he accused Raoul of committing every possible crime, as well as a few which, we hope, were and are utterly impossible. He wound up his invective with about as filthy a comparison as ever dropt from any pen—not excepting even that of one of the

irascible scholars of the Renaissance. The reporter of the quarrel adds that Eusebé was quite a dove in temper! —meaning, doubtless, that he was rather above than below the average of his order. And so perhaps he was, if we are to accept the testimony of history concerning the bishops south of the Loire. Probably no fairer specimen of them could be selected than Godfrey, who was Archbishop of Narbonne in the middle of the eleventh century. It was he who presided in the council of Teluges, wherein the Truce of God was established for the first time. The learned Benedictine authors of the "Histoire du Languedoc" state that the president of this council was about the first to break its decrees; that during his whole episcopacy he was at feud with the Count of Narbonne, and that in the pursuit of his quarrel he never hesitated to resort to force, without paying the smallest respect to times or seasons. In 1043 a second council was held for the same purpose as the former, this time at Narbonne, and here again Godfrey presided. Making his appearance clad completely in mail, he cast off his panoply, piece by piece, before the assembly, declaring that he abandoned it for ever, and pronouncing frightful curses against himself should he ever resume it. "But faithless even to such promises," write the Benedictines, "he girded on cuirass and sword at the first provocation that he conceived to be given him by the count." In 1054 Godfrey swore, for the third time, to abandon arms and strictly observe the Truce of God, and with just as little effect as before.

The monks and curés of the Langue d'Oc bore no better character than their superiors. One of the decrees of the Council of Arles (1261) informs us that it was customary thereabouts for clergymen to decide a dispute respecting a benefice by a free fight. The pro-

ceedings of various local councils of this period show, among numerous other curiosities of clerical life in southern France, that every priest was expected to entertain his brethren at the tavern on saying his first mass; that the habit of wearing weapons and using them in brawls was common among clerks; and that neither the offenders nor their brethren of higher grade liked the method of punishing such offences which had become common with secular judges. A council held in 1317 threatens to excommunicate all magistrates who shall punish brawling priests by marching them on foot through the streets and highways to their superiors, with their weapons slung round their necks and a trumpet sounding before them. Other common offences forbidden by Provençal councils were, on the part of the inferior clergy, splitting masses into four or five parts, and exacting the price of a whole mass for each section, and, on the part of the more elevated clergy, hearing mass in bed or reading the breviary by proxy. One of the consequences of all this irregularity is thus described by Vich and Vaissette, quoting an early chronicler: "So greatly were the priests decried that it became customary with the laity to ejaculate, when accused of something unusually mean or atrocious, 'Me do such a thing! Do you take me for a priest!' So greatly, indeed, was the clerical body hated that the members thereof dared not show themselves in public except under disguise, brushing their front hair over the tonsure, etc., to escape observation." We have given this much space to the clergy because, being moral teachers and social models, their character will enable us to form an idea of the character of their flocks.

Such devices as the Truce of God, whose origin we have mentioned, are always suggested by necessity;

and nowhere were they more necessary than within the limits of the Langue d'Oc, which included some of the most turbulent districts of mediæval Christendom. Among its nobles war was a favourite, or, rather, *the* favourite pastime. "No man is worth anything," says a high-born troubadour, Amanien des Escas, "who has not exchanged blows with an enemy on the battle field." Another chivalrous singer, Blacasset, dilates on foray, siege, battle, and slaughter as a chief delight. The high-hearted Savari de Mauleon thought warlike achievements the surest recommendation to a female heart. The strong-headed Bertrand von Born is still more emphatic in his approval of war as the business of a gentleman. Such men as these were, indeed, the exponents of popular opinion. Strife between the barons was ceaseless; and regular warfare between the sovereign princes almost as ceaseless. And the towns were fully as stormy as the country, being generally engaged in struggles with the neighbouring barons, or in factious contests within their own walls, but most frequently the latter, wherein they never failed to display the sanguinary ferocity characteristic of their race in periods of excitement. To these elements of discord was added another. Provence being a wealthy country, of whose manhood manufactures and commerce absorbed a large proportion, those who went to war therein on an extensive scale were compelled to hire mercenaries. Thus the free companies, who figured so conspicuously in Italian history a hundred and fifty years later, were only too well known between the Pyrenees and the Loire in the twelfth century. It was not that they were then to be seen there for the first time; the wars of the Norman dukes had introduced them to Poitou, Anjou, and Aquitaine ages before. But never had their ravages

been so grievously felt as during the wars waged by Henry II. of England and his rebellious sons, and especially after the close of this impious strife. Then vast numbers of these soldiers of fortune, instead of disbanding and returning home, kept together and fixed themselves at will in the county of Toulouse, and among the mountainous provinces stretching away through central France towards the Loire. Here, as may be gathered from a poem by Raymond of Miravals, they rendered themselves particularly obnoxious to the clergy, whose lands they stripped and whose houses they stormed and sacked by preference. Next to the clergy, the city men were their principal victims. Some of their doings are described by the Abbot of St. Genevieve, a traveller of the day. He states that he was in continual peril from their marauding parties; that he saw nothing along his route but ruined houses, towns destroyed by fire, and slaughtered bodies; that, in short, "the image of death was never out of his sight." The mischief, as usual, suggested the remedy. One Durand, a carpenter of Auvergne, pretending a mission from heaven, established an association among the people for the extermination of the brigands. The members called themselves the Pacificators, and distinguished themselves by wearing a white cap, and an image of the Virgin attached to the breast. From the former they were termed White Hoods, or Capuciatæ, by one or other of which names they are best known to history. They bound themselves by oath to maintain peace, to hasten at the first summons to oppose the enemies of peace, and to encounter them like men. In all other respects they continued to discharge their duties as useful members of society. This association was formed in 1182, and met with the greatest success. Nor was it managed unwisely.

The White Hoods purchased arms and were thoroughly well drilled as soldiers before they took the field. This they did in July, 1183, in countless masses. Near Chateaudun they enveloped a body of freebooters, and slew or captured every one. The priests, who had accompanied and to some extent directed the victors, claimed and received the prisoners, among them being 1,500 women. It is asserted that the ecclesiastics tortured the wretched freebooters and their paramours in the first instance, and then burnt them before slow fires, without sparing an individual of either sex! It was urged in excuse of this atrocious massacre, that the brigands had burnt churches and monasteries, as well as other buildings, and treated such priests, monks, and nuns as happened to fall into their hands much more severely than their other prisoners. The historian adds that previous to this victory the clergy seldom ventured to notice the outrages of the licentious soldiery, and shrank from punishing them with ecclesiastical penalties. The White Hoods did not confine their efforts to the destruction of the public enemy. The heretics managed to acquire the supremacy in their councils, and the whole body—or a large proportion thereof—proceeded to realize about the most levelling ideas ever propounded. They declared open war, not only with inequalities of rank, but also with every inequality of architecture and of dress. Churches, castles, and other buildings that presumed to rise above the humble level of the cottage were doomed to be razed; and hats and head-dresses, robes, boot-toes, sleeves, etc., of greater magnitude than those in use among the labouring classes, were ordered to be duly shorn of their superfluity. These sentences, too, were strictly carried out, and something more—until the princes of the Langue d'Oc joined their forces, and broke

up the dangerous brotherhood, after a sanguinary contest. The free companies and their exterminators were strikingly characteristic of the country and the era.

The morals of Christendom between the tenth century and the twelfth, though somewhat less depraved than during the darker ages, were still exceedingly relaxed—to a degree, indeed, hardly now conceivable. Pope Gregory VII., speaking of France, in a letter dated September 10th, 1074, says that "Law is forgotten and justice trampled under foot. There is no kind of infamy or cruelty, no act however vile or intolerable, that is not perpetrated with impunity." Then he denounces the private wars and the calamities springing therefrom, that devastate the country. He complains that crimes are committed for sheer pastime; he gives it as his deliberate opinion that the laws of God and man are equally despised, and he closes by denouncing the existing generation as composed of men "sacrilegious, incestuous, and perjured, who are ready to betray one another for the smallest trifle." Gregory's complaints are repeated, with small variation, by numerous competent authorities in succeeding ages. Nor would it be difficult to show that these writers were only too abundantly justified by events. The best proof of the general demoralization of those ages consists in the matter-of-course and open way in which certain vices were indulged. Then and long afterwards the epithet "bastard" was applied and accepted as a distinctive appellation, which conveyed no sort of reproach or dishonour. It meets one at every turn in mediæval history as designating some of the most distinguished men of their respective epochs. Even the greatest of English monarchs since Alfred, William the Conqueror, did not hesitate to sign himself thus. Another most striking

illustration of the state of manners and morals in the time of the troubadours is contained in the awful confession which the satellites of the Pope placed in the mouth of the wife of the Emperor Henry IV. True or false, it is equally valuable for our purpose, since the able men who dictated it would be careful to place nothing therein which was not, at least, probable. Quite as characteristic of the middle ages was a shameless remedy, commonly prescribed by the physicians of the good old times, and seldom rejected by the patients. Indeed we can call to mind but three instances of such rejection. A French king, a follower of the ruthless Charles of Anjou, and an Italian scholar of high promise refused, in turn, and at long intervals, to purchase life at the cost of a mortal sin.* Perhaps the most extraordinary illustration of mediæval manners was a certain scandalous body which was attached to the French Court, and which accompanied it whithersoever it went. Each member of this body we find qualified by Labbe (I. 209) as "meritricem regiam." Similar bodies were attached to other Courts, or provision was made in lieu thereof, somewhat like that expressed in an old English copyhold tenure, wherein it is specified that William Hoppeshor, of Roehampton, held certain lands on condition that "custodiet sex demisellas, silicet meritrices in usum domini regis." The Langue d'Oc was immoral like the rest of Europe, but it was not brutally so. Thanks, in a great measure, to the troubadours, its vice was refined. It has been said that vice is never so dangerous as when it takes the form of elegance, and a greater mistake could not be put into language. The progress of society is just this. In its primitive state,

* The elder Disraeli and Roscoe mention two of those examples. The third will be found in Fazello: "Storia de Sicilia." Dec. X., Lib. ix., cap. ii.

as the writings of all travellers inform us, depravity is the rule—depravity open, shameless, and brutal. As refinement progresses, vice loses, one by one, its primitive characteristics. First it ceases to be brutal, then it parts with its shamelessness, and finally it shrinks from sight. In the last stage it ceases to be distinctive of the age. Thus social elegance is unvariably the precursor of social purity. And in this way Provence, with its refined forms of vice, prepared the way for refinement without the vice.

One peculiarity of the age of the troubadours must not be forgotten. It was a time when scepticism in matters of faith was widely prevalent. The singular doctrine that a thing might be true theologically and false philosophically was then taught in public, and many able men who were devout believers in revelation as theologians were earnest atheists and unmitigated scoffers at received dogmas in their character of philosophers. It was unfortunate for their era. For though the teacher of scepticism is hardly ever a vicious man, since the strength of mind which enables him to despise current opinion enables him also, for the most part, to rise superior to sensual indulgence, the contrary is true of his disciples. The master adopts certain opinions because he thinks them true; the pupils accept them because they find them agreeable. Those ages of vice, being crowded with people whose faith was more than doubtful, were certainly rendered none the less vicious thereby, since nearly all the so-called freethinkers were so at second-hand and under the conviction of appetite rather than of argument.

In many respects, the civilization of the Provençals was far in advance of their contemporaries of Western Europe. Among them originated that singular religious

fraternity called the Bridge-builders, a body which did so much, by its labours and its example, towards improving the highways of the middle ages. Among them too the Freemasons found ample occupation. They were bountiful to the full extent of their means. Their towns contained foundling hospitals well supported and as well regulated, that of Marseilles being turned into an admirable nursery for seamen. They had bedlams, hospitals, and asylums in abundance for all charitable purposes. They had especially a society conducted by self-denying and devoted people of both sexes, for the release of such Christians as were captives among the Turks.

The higher classes of the Langue d'Oc feasted luxuriously and dressed splendidly; and all above the lowest rank prided themselves upon their superior polish. They studied banquet-giving, dressing, and deportment as arts, and, as will be seen in a future chapter, drew up rules of etiquette not very unlike those current among ourselves.

The Provençals were especially renowned as lovers of poetry. Their poets were not to be counted. Besides the multitudes of professional and amateur troubadours, who were always in motion, every town, every convent, every hamlet, even every petty castle, had its laureate. The family poets, as we may term these last, found ample occupation. They had to write metrical histories of the families to which they were attached. They were required to be always ready to satirise the adversaries of their master, and to uphold in song the superior beauty and accomplishments of the ladies of his household. They arranged entertainments, acted as masters of the ceremonies, and decided all disputed points of taste and *politesse*, like so many oracles. They were

expected to greet every wedding with an epithalamium and to lament every death with an appropriate elegy. They had to make ballads on every local event of note, whether ludicrous or serious; and it was a portion of their duty to aid the chaplain, the equerry, the master-at-arms, and the huntsman in educating the baronial youth, they being considered to possess at least as much knowledge of books, horses, weapons, dogs, and hawks as all their rivals put together. Further, they were expected to be competent instructors of those desirous of evoking harmony from all sorts of instruments, the big drum and the bagpipe included, and to possess the still rarer faculty of transferring their own poetic skill to any brain, however uncongenial. Finally, they were to be endowed with perfect patience and good temper, since, in the absence of the fool, the poet was the invariable subject whereupon the practical jokers, with which every Provençal castle was well stocked, preferred to exercise their laughter-raising abilities.

We cannot more suitably close our remarks on the Land of Song than by borrowing a passage from a historian thoroughly acquainted with the country and the period of the troubadours, Augustus Thierry. "The epoch when the King of England, becoming Duke of Aquitaine, obtained influence in the affairs of the south of Gaul was, for its inhabitants, the commencement of a new era of decline and misfortunes. Being thenceforward placed between two rival powers equally ambitious, they attached themselves sometimes to one, sometimes to the other, as circumstances directed; and were by each alternately supported, deserted, betrayed, and sold. From the twelfth century, the men of the south were never so well satisfied as when the kings of France and England were quarrelling. 'When,' said they, in their

national songs, 'will the truce be at an end between the Sterlings and the Tournois?' Their eyes were incessantly turned towards the north: 'What,' they asked of each other, 'are the two kings about?' They hated the foreigners; yet a turbulent agitation and an inordinate love of novelty and movement, constantly impelled them to court their alliance. Meanwhile they were disturbed internally by domestic quarrels, and by petty rivalries between man and man, town and town, or between one province and another. They were passionately fond of war, not from any sordid love of gain, nor yet from a noble impulse of patriotism, but because combats were romantic and poetical, for the sake of the turmoil and the apparatus, and the passions of a field of battle; they loved to see arms gleaming in the sun, and to hear horses neighing in the wind. One word from a fair lady made them fly to the crusade under the banner of the Pope, for whom they cared little, and risk their lives against the Saracens, the people of all others with whom they had the greatest sympathy in point of sentiment, and to whom they bore the strongest moral resemblance. To this levity of character they united the graces of imagination and genius, a taste for the arts, and for all refined enjoyments; they moreover possessed industry and wealth. Nature had bestowed on them every gift with the exception of political prudence, and that spirit of union so desirable in peoples springing from the same race and tenanting the same country. Their enemies combined to injure them; but they themselves never understood the principle of love as compatriots, or the system of mutual defence and of making a common cause. They paid a severe penalty for this dereliction of right feeling, by the loss of their independence, of their riches, and of those cultivated talents which they once inherited.

Their language—the second Roman language—nearly as polished as the Latin, from whence it was immediately derived, has given place, in their own mouths, to a foreign idiom whose accentuation is repugnant to them; while their natural and venacular idiom, which was that of their ancient liberty and glory, the language of the genuine poetry of the middle ages, has become the *patois* of the day-labourers and the maid-servants. Unavailing is all regret at this day expressed for these irrevocable changes: they are the ruins which Time has made, but which he will never repair."

# PROVENÇAL POETRY

PROVENÇAL Poetry was chiefly lyric; and its forms assumed, in most cases, a regularity absolutely servile. This is particularly to be observed in the longer compositions. In the Canzon—a name applied to poetry of the most opposite kinds, since it included the moral as well as the amorous—the rhymes and pauses adopted in the first stanza had to be observed right through to the end, that, is through six, twelve, or eighteen stanzas. The canzon always closed with a few lines in which the poet apostrophised his composition, and commissioned it to explain his sentiments to his mistress, his friends, or the world at large. This peculiarity was termed the Commiato, and, with many of the rules laid down for the structure of the piece to which it belonged, it was adopted by the Italians. In the Servente, which included the satirical effusions of the troubadour, more freedom was permitted; but therein the poet generally elected to hamper himself as in the canzon. Any length of line, from three to thirteen syllables, might be used. The stanza varied, too, in the number of lines; though the sestine, or that in which the lines were six—said to have been the invention of Arnaud Daniel—became ultimately the favourite. As to the rhyme, any form might be adopted: sometimes the alternate lines rhymed; sometimes the first line rhymed with the fourth,

and the second with the third; and sometimes the first line rhymed with the fourth, the second with the fifth, and the third with the sixth; and not unfrequently the lines rhymed at the commencement, or in the middle, precisely as at the end.

Hardly one of the shorter kinds of poetry for which we have names was unpractised by the Provençals. With them originated the sonnet. In its earliest form it was a short poem of uncertain length, and derived its title from the fact that it was sung to the *sound* of an instrument. The very name still in use was employed by the troubadours. Elias Carel writes :—

> Pos cai la fuella del garrir
> Farai me gai sonet,
>
> When there are leaves in the garden,
> Will I make me a joyous sonnet.

And Peyre d'Auvergne uses the same word :—

> Ab joi quem dimora,
> Vueill un sonet faire.
>
> When I dwell with joy,
> I desire to make a sonnet.

Nostradamus gives an example—corrupted, of course, like most of his citations—of a sonnet of fourteen lines, in which the order of rhyme is exactly that adopted by Petrarch, and which was certainly composed not later than 1320. It is, therefore, probable that the Provençals not only invented the sonnet, but fixed it in its present form.

The Ballad is also a Provençal invention, and was so called because it was sung during the dance. More curious was the Frottola, a composition in which the Italians were accustomed to string together proverbs and familiar sayings, without any connection save that

formed by rhyme and metre. Petrarch gives a specimen of frottole in his twenty-second canzon: and the barber Burchiello—following an example set by Sachetti, the novelist—carried this kind of composition to its extreme in his exquisitely nonsensical verses. The Provençals did not go quite so far as their imitators. In their frottole they made some attempt at sense and sequence of idea, as, for instance, Amanieu des Escas, from one of whose pieces we extract the following sentences: "I must speak my affection, or you cannot know it: The sleeper is unaware of being kissed. You may know that I love, but not how excessively I have realised the proverb 'he that would warm himself will burn:' You will find many lovers richer and handsomer than myself, but don't forget the proverb 'all is not gold that glistens.' You see me dying without stirring to save my life; thus you verify the old saying 'good service is always badly paid.' When I am in my grave you will regret your cruelty; 'after death comes repentance.'" Probably the frottola was invented by the improvisatores, of whom there were many among the troubadours.

The manufacture of macaronic verses, if not exactly practised by the singers of the Langue d'Oc, was, at least, suggested by them. Rambaud of Vaquieras composed a canzon, using the Provençal dialect in the first stanza, the Tuscan in the second, the French in the third, the Gasçon in the fourth, the Catalan in the fifth, and all five in the sixth, wherein he gave a line to each. His example was followed by a multitude of Italians, and by Dante among the rest. The latter has left a canzon in which the lines are alternately Latin, Provençal, and Tuscan, each in turn receiving precedence as the song goes on. Out of this mixture of languages the

successors of Dante contrived the kind of verse that is now known as macaronic.

The method of trifling in verse termed the acrostic was not unknown to the troubadours. Nostradamus has preserved one by Ricard of Barbesieux, of which the final letters compose the name of the author's mistress, Anna. This acrostic is too characteristic of the high flown style and exaggerated sentiment of Provençal lovers to be omitted. The reader must affix an A to the first and fourth lines; otherwise the paraphrase is literal.

The day that on my heart was imprinted your name
Was the day of my destruction,
Of my ruin and perdition,
Of my subjection to slavery, sorrow, and shame!

The Provençals had a better excuse for wasting their time in the composition of such absurdities than most of those who have imitated them since. One of the first laws of gallantry was thus laid down by Bernard of Veuladour:—

Should ever lying, prying spy
Me tempt to name my fair,
A lover of discretion, I
Know how to shun the snare.

My secret I may yield to those
Who can assist my suit;
When others press me to disclose
Thereon I must be mute.

Of what my dame deserves from me,
This shall I constant hold,
From her must nothing hidden be;
Of her be nothing told.

Being thus bound to secresy, with respect to the world at large, and yet naturally anxious that there should be no mistake concerning the identity of the subject of his

verses, it is clear that the troubadour was obliged to resort occasionally to some such device as the acrostic. The Italians, who were seldom pressed by the same necessity, adopted the device. But even among them the trifling was not altogether in vain. As Redi remarks, there are manuscripts in existence concerning whose authors we should have known nothing, had they not been careful to preserve their names in acrostics placed at the end of their writings.

Other contrivances were used by the Provençals for the same purpose as the acrostic. As ingenious as any was that attributed to Guillem Adhemar. He was the inventor of a Game of Whisper, whereby lovers could communicate their feelings without exciting the suspicion of the bystanders. There were some of the troubadours who hit on the plan of wrapping a declaration of love in an enigma. Thus did Cadenet:—

> Three letters of the A B C,
> If thou wilt learn, enough will be;
> These letters are A M T,
> And mean—all I can say to thee.

That is "Amo, Marguerita, Te"—Marguerite, I love thee. The story of the Cadenet is too illustrative of the age and country to be omitted. He was the son of the Lord of Cadenet, on the banks of the Durance. While he was yet a child, his father took part with the Count of Forcalquier, then at war with the Counts of Provence and Toulouse. The two counts conquered; and of the vanquished party, the Lord of Cadenet was one of those who suffered most severely. His castle was stormed, sacked, and burnt, and himself and the garrison slaughtered. His son was rescued from the terrible scene by a pitying knight, Guillem de Lauter, who brought him up as his own. The youth developed great

ability and personal beauty as he grew to manhood. "He was good, handsome, and courteous," writes the Provençal biographer, "and applied himself to compose cobboles and serventes. Then, abandoning his protector, he went from Court to Court as a troubadour; and, in order to avoid recognition, he adopted the name Baguas or boy. For a long time he wandered through many disasters; returning at length to Provence, and being no more remembered of any, he resumed the name of Cadenet, and began to make excellent songs. Raymond des Lignieres of Nice, who was the first to recognize his merits, equipped him well, and procured him much honour." So far, the story of Cadenet affords ample scope for fancy. We would like to know why he quitted his protector, and wherefore he changed his name—nor would we have taken it amiss had some of the mediæval gossips made us acquainted with a few particulars of the "disasters" in which his poetical novi iate was spent. Nostradamus, who dismisses the youth of Cadenet in a line, discourses of his after-life as follows:—"He loved Marguerite de Ries, for whom he composed many fine songs. But she made no account of him or of his songs, nor esteemed them a bit, as one who had no inclination to be loved by a learned man. Then he quitted her and went to the Marchioness of Montferrat, with whom he remained a considerable space. But singing still of his Marguerite and of the love for her that ever possessed him was the cause that compelled him, at length, to part from the Marchioness, but not until he had received from the latter many gifts, including arms and horses, clothing and money, and even servants. Returning to Provence, he determined to make every effort to soften the obdurate heart of Marguerite. Here he was patronised by Blancasset and

by Raymond, Lord of Agoult and Sault. And here after much poetizing, he fell in love with Blancassetta, the sister of Blancasset—a lady who was no less beautiful than virtuous. In praise and honour of her, he composed divers tolerable canzons. But some evil tongues, envious of his credit and advantages, spoke against him and against the honour of the lady. And this was the reason why he wrote a little book against the Galeadours, or maligners, who speak and detract falsely and grossly against the honour of people of worth. This tract contained songs, with the music, dedicated to the said Blancassetta; and in the conclusion or commiato, he thanked the scandalmongers for the honour they had done him, in belying him with their false chatter, since with their lies they had greatly aided to extend his fame and push his fortunes. With all this, he found it necessary to withdraw his affections from the lady. And at Aix he fell in love with a nun, not yet professed, called Agnes of Marseilles, who belonged to a noble Provnçcal family. But seeing himself deceived and despised by her, he departed, and entered among the Templars of St. Giles, with whom he remained a long time. And in the passage that they made beyond the sea, went he with the others, being as much esteemed and praised for deeds of arms as for poetry. There he sang highly in praise of the Virgin Mary, and made a fine confession of faith.* There too he ended his life, with many other cavaliers, in a battle that was fought with the Saracens in 1280." Here we must drop the story of Cadenet for a moment, to remark that the date just given is no more to be trusted than any of the dates of Nostradamus. With a century removed, it would be much nearer the truth. The battle of Tiberias, in which the Templars

* In rhyme be it understood.

fought so valiantly and suffered so severely, was lost by the Christians, July, 1186. Of Nostradamus himself it is but right to state that he writes always in good faith. We find him, so far as we have tested him, following his authorities scrupulously, neither exaggerating nor suppressing, nor studying effect in any way. Indeed, the conclusion of his story of Cadenet proves his thorough honesty as a biographer. Thus he continues:—"The monk of the Golden Isle says that the poet was named Elias, and did not die in battle; but that when he came back from the wars, he married the nun, and had a son named Robert. Uc of San Cæsar is of another opinion, affirming that the Elias and Robert mentioned by him of the Golden Isle, lived in the time of Giovanna I., Queen of Naples and Countess of Provence, who rewarded them for services done to the crown with the fiefs of Cadenet and other places. He adds that the poet of whom we speak flourished in the time of Raymond Berenger, last of that name, and of Charles of Anjou." Besides the variations of this story noticed by Nostradamus, there is still another, which states that Cadenet died in an hospital. In truth, implicit trust is to be placed on none of the stories told of the troubadours. There are few of them which are not as varying and contradictory as that of Cadenet. The reason is that these stories being as much a portion of the entertainment of the troubadour, and as popular as the best of his songs, he found his advantage in giving them an attractive form. It may be presumed then that he was not always as scrupulously faithful to his authorities as Nostradamus, that in fact he was very liable to amplify and to suppress, and that he did not scruple at times to join the more striking adventures of several troubadours in one story. There were no general consultations among the rhap-

sodists as to the version to be adopted in any one instance. Each troubadour, therefore, stored his repertory according to the best of his judgment; and thus there came to be so many variations in each tradition. But whether they be true or false, or a mixture of truth and falsehood, these stories are equally valuable. No story-teller would attribute other than probable adventures to his hero. His narrative, as a whole, might not be descriptive of the adventures of any one personage, but each of its parts was pretty sure to be founded on a real event. Thus whatever we may think of the stories told of the troubadours as biographies, we may rely upon them as presenting us with fair pictures of life and manner.

As we cannot always believe the biographies of the Provençal poets, so we cannot be quite certain that any of them was the author of the better pieces attributed to him. Where there were several of the same name, as in the case of the three Vidals, the two Von Borns, and others, the most celebrated member of the group was credited with the better productions of his namesakes. One troubadour, also, was in the habit of singing the songs of another, and not unseldom of claiming them as his own; nor was it an easy thing to decide between the false claim and the true one. To prevent such plagiarism the wiser poets adopted the plan once resorted to by Virgil, of suppressing a portion of every piece that they composed until there was no longer any danger of seeing it appropriated. To this plan, and the mischief it was intended to counteract, Gaucelin Faudit alludes when he remarks in one of his canzons, "He is a fool who sings all his verses." Then the various districts of the Langue d'Oc were exceedingly jealous of the renown of their respective poets, and never omitted an

opportunity of adding leaves to their laurels by ascribing to them any popular poem whose origin appeared at all doubtful. All these causes have produced so much uncertainty respecting authorship among the troubadours that even such a celebrity as Arnaud Daniel has not escaped it. The composition from which Petrarch took a line of his seventeenth canzon is claimed for Guilhem Boyer, as well as for the "Grand Master of Love." It is the same, however, with the early literature of every country. Therein the greater names devour the smaller ones. Thus, Dante, de Loris, James I. of Scotland, Raleigh, etc., are credited with many of the writings of other people.

Besides the shorter pieces of Provençal poetry already mentioned, there were others to which the general title Cobbole, was applied. Some were songs of the class termed by the Italians madrigal; others were of the character of the epigram. Any poem, indeed, which was short, or irregular in its structure, came under this designation. A great master of the art of building cobboles was Arnaud of Marveil, the "men famoso Arnaldo" of Petrarch. He was the son of a knight whose poverty compelled him to sell his land. The youth began life as clerk to a notary; but having received a tolerably good education—for the period—and possessing poetic abilities, coupled with an irrepressible liking for strolling, he became a troubadour, and went through a severe apprenticeship. "Wandering the wide world over along with other poets," writes Nostradamus, "he learnt from them to become a poet himself." His adventures as a vagabond differed in nothing from those related of similar personages in our chapter on Wandering Troubadours. After traversing many countries he attached himself to the Viscount of Beziers and made

the viscountess the theme of his songs. But happening to be afflicted with a disease unusual among gentlemen of his profession—"excessive modesty," he shrank at first from putting his name to his lyrics, and even allowed others to claim whatever merit attached to them. Finding at length that they were well received, especially by the viscountess, he ventured to announce himself the author. Whether the pretenders attempted to dispute his right or not is a matter of which we have been left in ignorance; perhaps they did, for such things have happened at other times and in other places. Be that, however, as it may, the poet of Marveil was recognized as the owner of the lyrics in question, and well rewarded —with horses, clothes, and money, as well as with full permission to hymn the praises of the viscountess to any extent. This she considered doing him sufficient honour. Not so thought the poet. This whilom clerk and remarkably modest vagabond actually aspired to become the cavalier servente of the dame, who was the daughter of a sovereign prince, Raymond, Count of Toulouse! She, as it happened, was already provided with a suitable gallant, Alfonse, King of Aragon; and the result of Arnaud's presumption was his expulsion from Beziers. He retired to Montpellier, where he subsided, though somewhat slowly, into one of the most thorough-going moralists of the age, dying eventually in a monastery. After leaving Beziers he composed the following cobbole:—

Mistaken sage! no longer say
  We view but through the eye;
My lady, who is far away,
  I see as she were nigh.
As vividly her beauties shine;
As much they move this heart of mine.

Us two may tyrant force divide,
And thrust us far apart;
But though they rend her from my side,
They cannot from my heart.
Ye towers that her I love contain,
When shall I visit you again?

Of her's how gladly would I see,
The meerest, meanest clown!
More welcome would he be to me
Than one that wore a crown!
With her into a desert driven,
I'd thank my fate, and call it heaven.

The first stanza alludes to a matter much disputed among the troubadours—the origin of love. The theory most generally accepted is thus laid down by Girand Borneil:—

Tam cum los oills el cor ama parvenza
Car li oill son del cor drogoman
E ill oill van vezer,
Lo cal cor plaz retener.
E can ben son acordan,
E ferm tuit trei d' un semblan,
Adoncas pren verai amors nascenza,
Da so qe li oill fan al cor agradar,
Qasthers non pot naisser ni comenzhar,
Mais per lo grat delstreis nais e comenzha.
Per la grat e pel coman
Dels treis e per los plazer,
Nais amor q'en bon esper,
Vasos amies confortan,
Perqe tuit li fin aman
Sachan c'amors es fin benevolenzha,
Qi nais del cors e del oills ses doptar.
Qel oill la fan florir el cor granar,
Amors qes fruits de lor vera semenzha.

So through the eyes love attains the heart,
Because of the heart are the eyes the Turkmans (scouts),
And the eyes go to reconnoitre,
This that it shall please the heart to retain.
And when they are well agreed,

And firm all three (the two eyes and the heart) in the same resolve
True love then takes birth,
From this that the eyes make agreeable to the heart;
And wanting this, it can neither be born, nor have commencement.
By the grace and by the command
Of the three, and by their pleasure
Is born love, that with good hope
Goes his friends comforting;
Because all accomplished lovers
Know that love is perfect benevolence.
That it is born of the heart and of the eyes, is without doubt;
And the eyes cause to flower and the heart to fructify
Love, that is the fruit of their very seed.

Guilhem of Figueras writes in like manner: "Love has no power save that which it derives from the eyes. Love never does us any wrong whereof we have cause to grieve; it has power over nobody except by their own consent. True love has in itself neither strength, nor good, nor evil, if the eyes do not communicate it. It cannot oppose what pleases the heart and the eyes; it is born of the heart, whereof the eyes are the messengers." But the story of Rudel, and the similar story of André of France, furnished the bolder and more independent spirits with an excuse for differing from Giraud of Borneil, who, it appears, was the Johnson of Provence.* A number of troubadours argued from these stories that the eyes were not absolutely necessary to excite love in the heart. From Borneil's theory sprang many ideas common to the troubadours, notably one used, among others, by Arnaud of Marveil himself: "My heart is a mirror in which I can always delight me by contemplating the charms of my mistress." And such ever recurring phrases as "sweet smiles," "gentle looks," "excellent beauty," etc., sprang from the same source. Besides these stereotyped expressions there were a

* Borneil was quite as dictatorial and as moral as Boswell's hero.

number of conceits which every singer was expected to use. He was bound to represent himself as a captive during the period of probationary love-making, and to declare that death would be the certain result of protracted severity on the part of his mistress. If he were in disgrace, it was his winter, and then his poetic glance met nothing but snow, ice, bare boughs, dark clouds, and dismal scenes. If he were happy, then he had reached his springtide, and was sure to be surrounded by merry birds and flowers full of bloom. While Bernard of Ventadour sued without response, he complained that though there was a round of seasons for others he was always condemned to live in polar weather. But when his mistress relented, Bernard declared that spring, with all its delights, had arrived—although, in reality, it was mid-winter. Reversing the simile, the troubadours invariably argued that their mistresses should relent in spring. Thus Rambaud of Vaquieras entreats his lady-love to send him a loving message and token on May Eve, lest the festive morrow should find him incapable of sharing in its joys. The troubadours, indeed, dwelt upon spring and its delights to—shall we write—a disgusting extent. "The flowers that I gather," sings Arnaud Daniel, "shall have love for their fruit and joy for their seed, and their perfume shall surpass that divine odour which the month of May scatters over the fields." "I cannot delay my song," exclaims Guilhem of Adhemar, "the summer returns, the fields are laden with grain, and the orchards filled with fruit, for the mistress I worship assures me of her love." Vidal, too, adopts the same strain when he cries, "I revive with the spring, which reanimates all nature, and pours into my soul the soft effusions of love."

Every mistress exercised the influence of the sun,

moon, and polar star over her lover, and included his heaven in her person, as expressed in the following, lines :—

Thou art the sun, whose radiant beam
Nurtures the seeds of song,
The moon that rolls the noble stream
Of thought my soul along.

The sky to which my hopes are borne,
The star that guides the while—
'Tis winter, dear, till thou return,
And darkness till thou smile.

She was always painted as a model of perfection bodily, mental, and sentimental. Thus sings Huges of St. Cyr, of Clara of Anduse, whom he really addressed, though his song carried the name of the Countess of Provence—according to a custom which we shall explain elsewhere :—

Honour and wisdom all her deeds dictate ;
Her manners—perfect dignity and grace ;
Her heart—within it sweetness rules in state ;
Her words are witching ; beautiful her face.

She was credited with the most extraordinary powers. Speaking of Ermengarde of Narbonne, Peyre Rogiers asserted that "intimacy with her could not fail to polish the rudest and most uncultivated minds." And Peyre Vidal, going much further, but still confining himself strictly within the well beaten track, boldly stated that his mistress proving favourable, would be "certain to preserve him in perpetual youth and vigour, keeping him always fresh and tender as the new-blown flower on the green branch." To the troubadour, the rose was always suggestive of his lady's bloom, and the nightingale of her voice. In absence, the wind that blew from her residence was always hailed with delight, as by Bernard of Venladour, and Vidal, paraphrases of whose

ideas on this item will be found elsewhere. It was also a common thing to be awed into silence by her presence, and to debate within one's self whether it were better to die of love concealed, or of fear and shame in revealing it. There was one curious simile more used than any other. In it the singer compared himself to the ox chasing the hare; nor was the idea destitute of ingenuity. It was very expressive of the blind fortune that presided over such affairs. In such a chase success could not be claimed as a merit, nor failure regarded as shameful. There were multitudes of other hackneyed thoughts. Indeed, not a few poems were composed of such things from beginning to end, as the following by Guilhem of Cabestaing:—

Gay is the strain that love dictates;
Oh, thou whose smile my soul elates,
May I be reft and cursed of love,
Unfaithful should I ever prove.

If heaven be gained by love and prayer,
Then I at once should enter there;
I pray—oh, hear! I love—behold!
Be just then and your arms unfold.

As common were the following ideas, flung together by Aymerie of Beauvoir:—

Since I received that far too harsh reply,
Which my respectful tale of love drew down:
I dare not face again that queenly eye,
Nor meet that brow contracted to a frown.

Ah, how I pine my mistress to behold!
I'm dying thus compelled to stand aloof!
Oh, that her charms were cast in gentler mould!
Or that my heart was formed of sterner stuff!

Who knows it death to look upon the sun,
The wretch must needs his days to darkness give;
And therefore I that beauteous face must shun,
I could not look on it in wrath and—live!

And fully as common were the thoughts which Arnaud Daniel expressed in this way:—

I've sinned 'gainst my dame, but, confessing with grief,
I pardon deserve like the penitent thief;
Oh, could I but soften this mistress of mine!
I'd love her far better than priest loves his shrine.

I'd e'en be content—were I sure to possess
When Time, the alchemist, has silvered each tress—
So strong is the passion that o'er me holds sway—
To wait and to hope through the tedious delay.

Another common theme of the songs of the troubadours was the body of scandalmongers. They were never weary of denouncing them, like Clara of Anduse, as those "envious and evil-tongued people who are the enemies of all peace and joy."

It must not be supposed that originality was at a discount among the poets of the Langue d'Oc. A good many of them thought, with Peyre d'Auvergne, that "no song was ever good that resembled another." The commonplaces that we have mentioned, or some of them, could not be dispensed with in a regular canzon; but ideas figured beside them that were perfectly, and often painfully, ridiculous in their novelty. Thus Calvo, speaking of the death of a lady, declares that "without her Paradise would have been ill furnished with Courtesy." And thus Rambaud of Vaquieras compared his feelings, when surveying his charming mistress, to the swelling pride and vanity of the peacock when flaunting his gaudy tail! Even surpassing these absurdities are the string of conceits with which Ricard of Barbesieux attempted on one occasion to conciliate an offended mistress. An account of the circumstances under which this most singular of canzons was composed will be found in our chapter on the Cavalier Servente.

As when he tumbles on the ground all prone th' elephant lies,
Until his kindred gather round and rouse him by their cries ;
It was my fate to lie of late, all helpless in despair,
Until these lovers true I heard, for me preferring prayer.

Ah, had I not obtained their aid, and thus regained your grace,
I'm sure that death, the tyrant grim, must soon have closed the case !
My love is not of bearish kind, nor subject to such laws,
It cannot fatten, you away, by sucking ideal paws.

Yet wanting your nutritious smile, had death to me arrived,
'Tis my belief that, phœnix-like, I would have soon revived ;
And, bursting the sepulchral stone, me rendered to my queen,
To win her grace and see the face for two long years unseen.

Go, canzon, find the fairest dame on earth, and to her say
That 'neath her feet my faithful heart I at discretion lay ;
As when exhausted in the chase, turns round the hunted deer,
And casts himself, in hope of ruth, beneath the hunter's spear.

As curious in its way is the cobbole which the chivalrous Savari de Mauleon addressed to his mistress :—

Sung in song and told in story
Are your triumphs and your glory ;
How before you rivals fly,
How around you lovers die !
If you thus resistless be,
You are just the foe for me !
Furbish up your arms anew—
    Weave your wiles,
    Whet your smiles,
    Marshal all your charms like lances,
    Light the Greek fire of your glances—
Spite of all, I'll conquer you.
How? why just as lady bright
Should be vanquished by good knight,
Who in serving best does war her—
Conquering her by conquering for her.
Here am I, with fearless hand—
    Lances lifted, casques on head,
    Coursers bridled, banners spread—
Prompt to ride at your command !

Say what castle shall I win?
It, be sure,
I'll secure,
And your heart, as well, within.

This affectation of originality, however, had its uses. There were seasons when it even urged them into something like common sense, as when Bernard of Ventadour manufactured the following madrigal:—

You say the moon is all aglow,
The nightingale a singing—
I'd rather watch the red wine flow,
And hear the goblets ringing.

You say 'tis sweet to hear the gale
Creep sighing through the willows—
I'd rather hear a merry tale,
'Mid a group of jolly fellows!

You say 'tis sweet the stars to view
Upon the waters gleaming—
I'd rather see, 'twixt me and you
And the post, my supper steaming.

The troubadours carried antithesis to the utmost—such terms as "free slavery," "brilliant darkness," "boundless prison," "hopeful fear," "fearful hope," etc., were repeated by them at every turn. They were also exceedingly given to pun, and play upon words approaching thereto. Thus Borneil, who was less addicted to this kind of thing than most of the brotherhood, terminates a canzon:

Canzos, vai dire en Blacas en Prohenza
Qel fai valor valer, e prez prezar;
Com lui lauzan non pot sobre lauzar,
Tan es valenz e fina sa valensa.

Canzon, go say to Don Blacas in Provence,
That he makes value to be valued and price to be prized,
Since men in praising him cannot over praise him,
So worthy is he, and so excellent is his worthiness.

A far better specimen of these players upon words was the troubadour Ogier. Nearly the whole of his pieces consist of such sentences as these, "I shall serve to disserve, while serving the corrupted corrupters who surround princes with base counsels, counselling them to dishonour honour." Blancasset, a much superior poet, was in the habit of using similar contemptible phrases. For instance, he advises his mistress, the Countess Beatrice :—

Qe sap valer
Sa vallence plus valen de valor,
E sa honzanza plus honzada de honor.

That she should know how to value
Her valuableness that was more valuable than value,
And her honourableness that was more honourable than honour.

And yet the same writer could break forth, on occasion, into such vigorous sentiment as the following, of which, however, it will be observed that the commencement is composed of commonplaces of an order already noticed :—

Pleases me the pleasant time of Easter, that brings the leaves and the flowers—pleases me when I hear the babble of the birds, when they make their warblings re-echo through the bushes—pleases me when I see pavilions raised securely in the meadows—pleases me to the heart when I see cavaliers armed and mounted in the listed field—pleases me when I see the foragers make the people fly before them with their goods—pleases me when I see goodly men-at-arms around me. And I have great joy when I see strong castles besieged—when I behold the engines casting stones and the slings hurling missiles—when I behold the capture and sack of places enclosed with walls and ditches and well defended by palisaded outworks. Pleases me when one lord goes to invade another, armed, mounted, and fearless—when he knows how to lead and encourage his valiant vassals, so that all are eager to follow him into the thick of the fight—for no baron is at all prized until he has given and taken blows. Pleases me when I mark axes and swords cut and shatter shield and glittering helm at the begin-

ning of the fray—when I see many vassals rushing together—when I see horses, some dead and some wounded—when I see intent on battle every man of valour, fearing not to peril either head or limb, since it is better to die than live vanquished. I say truly unto you that more than eating, drinking, and sleeping, do I relish the sound of the strokes dealt by both parties, and the sight of men and horses tumbling in the grass, when I hear cries of "Help! Help!"—when I see them drop their shields in the ditches, and their gauntlets on the sward—when I see the dead lie marked with lance thrust in the ribs.

Perhaps the most annoying of all the peculiarities of Provencal poetry was the obscurity which many poets deliberately affected and justified, like Gavaudim. "Let none blame me," wrote this troubadour, "for selecting a cloudy style of writing, or, at least, let them reserve their censure until they are capable of sifting the wheat that lies therein from the chaff." Ignaure, another of those lovers of obscurity, excused his predilection by asserting that he preferred the praise of the discriminating few to that of the purblind multitude. In justice to Giraud of Borneil, some portion of whose extravagances we have quoted, it is but fair to state that he set his face most decidedly against these utterers of mystic phrases, maintaining that simplicity and clearness were the first essentials of poetry. Borneil, however, was but one against many; and besides, the schoolmen, whom the troubadours imitated in many points, set them a tempting example in the matter of obscurity. The body of the learned in the middle ages—or the inner circle of that body—seems to us to have formed a secret society, whose purpose was to keep as much knowledge as possible confined to itself, after the manner of the Druids, or of the Egyptian and Chaldean sages. When compelled to put the more occult portions of their scientific acquirements into a permanent form, they adopted one perfectly unintelligible to the vulgar. Some

wrapped up their more valuable secrets in parables; others threw them into the shape of pictures or illuminations; and others again adopted the device of Roger Bacon, who, giving the name of an important ingredient of gunpowder in an anagram, rendered the whole receipt for the composition of the substance a complete mystery to the uninitiated. Our reading shows us that much more was known to the few, six or seven hundred years ago, than modern savants are inclined to think. Strange and startling glimpses of this knowledge flicker over the pages of the poets and romancists of the middle ages. Selecting but two examples from many, we may remark that no one could have written that passage in the "Inferno" of Dante (canto xxxiv., lines 70-84) descriptive of the transit of Virgil and his follower through the centre of the earth, who was not well acquainted with the leading principles of the theory of gravitation, as elaborated by Newton. Nor could anyone have evolved from the depths of his internal consciousness a passage so singularly anticipative of the discovery of America as that contained in stanzas 228-230 of the twenty-fifth canto of the "Morgante Maggiore"—precisely the canto in which it is said that the author, Pulci, was aided by the erudite Marsilio Ficino.

Prominent among the singularities of Provençal literature stands what is called the Tenzon. This was a dispute in which two or more poets took part. In all probability the tenzon was originally conducted extemporaneously. A number of poets, male and female, would collect—in summer under a tree with a beautiful prospect open before them, and in winter round the cheerful hearth—where a subject would be given out for each to deal with in turn. The sort of verse to be employed was first determined, and then the disputants,

one after another, were required to concentrate their arguments, each into a single stanza; and when all had taken part in the contest the president would give the decision. In later times the tenzon became more elaborate. Instead of contending in the way just mentioned, several troubadours would select a subject and fix the form of metre. Then the one who was to open the contest would compose his stanza at leisure and transmit it to the next. So the tenzon would pass round, augmenting as it went, and passing weeks, perhaps months, in the circuit. When all the disputants had said their say, the composition would be submitted to a competent judge or judges, a poet of admitted eminence, or one of the Courts of Love; and the decision was usually summed up and added to the tenzon in a stanza of similar structure to the others. The subjects were as various as the minds that suggested them, the majority being nice questions of gallantry. In all cases the disputes bore a marked resemblance to those then so common in the universities. Among the questions handled by the tenzon were the following: "Is it better to love an inexperienced young beauty, or one who has reached her prime and gained the fullest experience? Is it better to be loved and die immediately afterwards, or to enjoy long life without passing beyond hope? There are two married men; one has a wife who is handsome but disagreeable, and the other a wife that is amiable but ugly. Both are jealous, which of the two is the greater fool? Which would you prefer; an enchanted mantle which would enable you to win the love of every lady, or an enchanted lance which would enable you to vanquish every cavalier? Twenty gentlemen have lost their way in a storm and are ready to perish; their shouts for aid are heard by two knights who are

hastening to meet their mistresses; one turns aside to aid the distressed, while the other continues his route—which of the two does the better?' There were also tenzons in which the poets disputed on the excellence of their respective countries. A tenzon, rendered remarkable by the odd way in which one of the disputants contradicted his arguments by his conduct, was held between Guilhem de la Tor and Sordel. "There is a lover," said the former, "who has a cherished mistress; he sees her expire before his face; should he die with her or survive her?" Sordel replied that "when death divided a loving couple, it was better for the one that had been so bereaved to follow the other to the tomb, than to remain on earth in agony and despair." To this la Tor responded that "the dead could gain nothing by the sacrifice of the living; and that it could not be right to do that from which no good, but much evil, would result." As will be seen in our notice of Guilhem de la Tor, in our chapter on the Wandering Troubadours, precisely the event which he supposed in the opening of the tenzon befell himself, and then he acted quite according to the views which he condemned in Sordel.

Tenzons on subjects such as those just mentioned were mere exercises of wit. Others were neither more nor less than not very elegant scolding matches. Of these a good specimen is given in another chapter. We subjoin a second, in which the disputants were Rambaud of Vaquieras and the Marquis of Malespina.

MARQUIS.

They tell me, oh, my Rambaud! and I really think it true,
That your mistress has resumed her wit, and quite discarded you,
Despising, as she ought to do, your canzons and yourself,
And fully meaning never more to yield you love or pelf.
The case is hard for such a bard; but you may shun such shame
By mending note; or if you can't, by choosing lowlier dame.

RAMBAUD.

Yes, it is true, as told to you, a false one is my fair,
You ought to wed her, on my word !—you'd make a pretty pair !
Unscrupulous are you as she, greedy and treach'rous both,
Still ready, when your interest calls, to break or word or oath.
Nay worse than that, my noble peer, do not the Lombards say
That purses, like a common thief, you took on the highway ?

MARQUIS.

And if I took a purse or two, what's that to you, my friend ?
I took them boldly, like a man, and had the heart to spend ;
So would I now, if there were need, nor ever shroud my head,
Rather than trudge afoot and beg, as you have done, for bread.
For begging, or for sordidness, there's none that can me blame,
Come, if you can, put hand on heart, and say the very same !

RAMBAUD.

Yes, Marquis, I admit that you are quite a worthy lad,
To cutting purse and breaking oath some virtues more you add.
Your tongue is quick when one's away, and slow when one's in sight.
Your spur is sluggish in the charge and eager in the flight.
I know not from what ancestor your nature you inherit,
You're always first in evil deeds and last in works of merit.

MARQUIS.

Why did you drop the jongleur's harp, the knightly lance to rear ?
It was a folly ; but a fool, you know, you always were.
That was a jolly life to lead, brimful of freak and fun ;
But now you must live soberly and into perils run.
Tho' I must say who on the field have kept you well in sight,
That any day you'd run away, rather than stand and fight.

The following tenzon between Mary of Ventadour, a lady highly renowned among the troubadours, and Guy of Uzes, is in a different strain.

MARY.

My dear Guy of Uzes, that silent your muse is
Like many, your friends, I deplore ;
Come now, for my sake, the lute again take
And touch as you touched it of yore.
I give you a task—'tis a question I ask,
None better than you can disclose,
Should one I wo'n't mention show her knight such attention,
As he to her usually shows ?

GUY.

Though sworn to be mute, and no more to touch lute,
Your entreaty I cannot refuse.
'Twixt lovers should be purest equality,
And as they are used they should use.

MARY.

Yet the lady should rule, and the knight, dutiful,
Her every command should obey;
To submit is his place, and be grateful for grace,
And not as a monarch to sway.

GUY.

When hearts Love entwines, think not he designs
That one of them despot should be.
When lovers concede to their ladies the lead,
'Tis only in mere courtesy.

The foregoing could hardly be more vapid. And yet there is reason to think that it is more like the average tenzon than almost any other that has been preserved. It is not without its value either, since it furnishes evidence confirmatory of a story which we tell elsewhere. Of a higher character is the tenzon between Sordel and Montan.

SORDEL.

I marvel that a prince's hand can contradict his tongue,
And that his words shall all be right, while all his deeds are wrong.
To noble promises should deeds as noble still accord,
Or men may stigmatise who speaks with one short, ugly word.

MONTAN.

I marvel not, too much it costs generous to be and just,
For princely praise to swell the speech of those who princes trust;
Yet would the folly me amaze in any but a prince,
That thinks a handsome falsehood may good service recompense.

SORDEL.

I would, my Montan, that to all this maxim we could teach,
Never to promise aught but that which lies within their reach—
Who ready shows to promise all, that man his honour slights;
And lies should be accounted shame in princes as in knights.

Our next specimen turns on a question of gallantry, the disputants being Giraud of Borneil and Guilhem de Mur.

Say which his lady to delight
Should most exertion use;
The happy lover, or the wight
Who yet uncertain sues?

"The last," cries Will, "'s the truer tale
Of every thing we see;
Still sweetest sings the nightingale
While lonely on the tree.

"But when a mate his nest contains
His song is less refined;
Then breathes he naught but careless strains,
And so with human kind."

Said Borneil, "I deny it, boy,
And thus my case I prove;
Possession cannot worth destroy,
Reward ne'er lessens love.

"As for your nightingales, have they
Nor sentiment, nor thought,
To teach them, yonder on the spray
To bear them as they ought.

"If there be men of mood like these,
No kin with them I claim;
I know that most I wish to please,
When kindest is my dame."

One other specimen and we shall have done with the tenzon. That beau ideal of Provençal knighthood, Savari de Mauleon, in company with two other gentlemen, happened to make a call on Guillemette de Benavias, a dame who was evidently an arrant flirt. It seems that all three gentlemen made love to her at the same time, and that she actually succeeded in sending them all away equally satisfied, each being fully per-

suaded that he, and he only, was the accepted suitor. During the interview one of the knights sat before her and one on each side. And at its close she replied to their respective entreaties by squeezing the toe of one, and pressing the hand of another, while she bestowed a bewitching glance on the third. When he got home Savari de Mauleon summoned two renowned troubadours, Gauceln Faudit and Hughes of Bacalaria, the latter being a gentleman who was never known to have wandered, to assist him in deciding which of the three favours deserved the preference. Gauceln Faudit preferred the tender glance. A grasp of hand, he argued, was a matter of courtesy, and the touch of the foot might be an accident; but there could be no mistake about a look of sweetness; that certainly must come from the heart. Hughes of Bacalaria agreed with Gauceln as to the pressure of feet, but differed with him as to the look, ladies being adepts in distributing such things when they really mean nothing by them. He considered that when a lady removed her glove in order to grasp the hand of her suitor it was a certain proof of affection. Savari derided the arguments of both, pronouncing a panegyric on tender looks, which we need not repeat. The story seems to us a diluted version of another told by Burton in the "Anatomie of Melancholie," running somewhat as follows :—

Three students spiced the ruby stream
With argument divine,
And what but woman e'er was theme
Of vigorous youth and wine?

Oh, name the form that chiefly glads,
And draws the deepest sigh;
Cried Hal, "A brimming bumper, lads!
I drink the melting eye."

"But what are eyes when slumbers close?"
Cried Will. "My toast shall be
A charm that fades not in repose,
The peachy cheek for me!"

"Away!" says Rob; "with failing light
These charms ye must resign;
As dear, my friends, to touch as sight,
The juicy lip be mine!"

'Twas argued vainly o'er and o'er;
At length, to stay the strife,
They fixed to lay the case before
Old Logic's buxom wife.

And she, whose award we shall not attempt to paraphrase, decided the question against all the disputants.

The tenzon, it will be noticed, could be rendered the medium of inflicting censure. Satire, however, had its own peculiar form of poetry, resembling the canzon in all respects except the commiato, and bearing the name servente. The servente might be levelled at an individual; and it might be published in reprehension of general shortcomings. It might assume any of the various tones of scorn, irony, denunciation, or regret; it might bear as hard on sins of omission as on sins of commission; and it might, and indeed, often did, take the form of a song of triumph, like the servente which Cadenet addressed to the people whose evil speaking compelled him to part with the lady Blancassetta. A vigorous specimen of this kind of servente, by Guilhem Adhemar, was hurled at a group who did him a good deal of injury.

What, though ye did my ruin plot,
Ye scoundrels, ye have ta'en
Nothing from me whose loss is not
A real, solid gain.

Ye thought to cause destruction's flood
Above my head to roll,
And ye have brought me only good!
I thank ye from my soul!

I served in chains, as one who rows,
A slave—a wretched one!
Had ye been friends, instead of foes,
I must have been undone.

Another year those toils among,
Had sunk me to the grave;
So in your haste to do me wrong,
Blind fools! ye did but save.

Meaning to hurl me down to die,
Ye thrust me up to fame;
'Twas done in hatred, therefore I
Contemn ye all the same.

When I avenge me, peddling band,
Be it your pain to know;
Your persecution nursed the hand,
And nerved to deal the blow.

A servente by Folquet de Lunel was of far wider range; it struck at "all sorts and conditions of men."

In the name of Him, the glorious One, the merciful and strong,
Who in His likeness made us men, do I compose this song;
Therein it is my firm resolve to honour all the good,
And them to vex who Him neglect that shed for them His blood.
No longer are the mighty ones intent to serve the Lord.
In former days there still were some to draw for Him the sword;
But, for the Holy Sepulchre not one of them now cares,
And the dog Turk is left thereby to breathe unholy prayers.

By excommunicating much your proud priest upwards mounts;
The emperors unjust to kings; the kings unjust to counts;
The counts pillage the barons, the knights the barons spoil;
And these, in turn, pounce down upon the tillers of the soil.
The farmers to the folk beneath the like injustice deal,
And from the wages of their hinds a portion always steal.

The leeches, knowing not their trade, instead of curing, slay ;
Yet still the rogues know how to make the weeping kindred pay.
The merchant and the artisan are rogues and liars sure ;
But the monarch of all liars is the wandering troubadour !
The wife and husband vie in sin—to say who 's worst I can't ;
For every mistress that he keeps she'll find you a gallant.

The innkeeper does you receive as though you were a god ;
The hostess smiles, the servants watch your every beck and nod ;
You let them share the food you bring, your game, your bread, your wine,
And, in return, they sell bad hay and corn just fit for swine ;
Their fodder's bad, their measure's worse, and then, to diddle the stranger,
The cunning innkeeper bores holes in the bottom of the manger.
Your horse gets but a sorry feed, for half the corn runs through,
To feed the pigs, that fatten without, while the innkeeper laughs at you.
His beds are hard—his sheets—oh fie ! and then does he not swear
When you of overcharge complain, or grumble at his fare !

Ye heretics, ye usurers, ye faithless to all trust,
Ye infidels, and ye who pay only because ye must,
Ye ferrymen and toll-takers, who pocket half the dues,
Ye bailiffs, who to rob the poor your office chiefly use,
Against each one I raise my voice and bid him mend his way--
On pain of going to a place whose name I need not say.
Myself have sinned, as well as ye, but ere that I am sent hence,
I hope that God will give me time to make a good repentance ;
The devil's nets o'erspread the world and underlie the cloisters—
And wherefore not, since they entered heaven, and angels dredged like oysters?

May God have mercy on us all, subdue each royal mind,
And guide the Pope, who ought to be the father of mankind,
From war and strife to clear the lands into his charge committed—
For if he do'n't, I'm much afraid, on a certain fork he'll be spitted !
There are open wounds in Sicily that I'm sure he ought to close,
They're the grief of all good Christian men, and the joy of our pagan foes.

This servente in the name of God I opened, and intend
That in the same most Holy Name it shall, as fitting, end.
I'll send it to the Count of Rodez to mend therein, if he lists ;
Whatever may erroneous be—no better judge exists.

And if with him it favour find, when he has read it o'er,
Let it be written in his book, along with so many more.
Now of this song of mortal men I'd have ye know furthermore,
I made it in the year of Christ twelve hundred and eighty-four;
And Lunel was the very place where did this song indite I,
Who, for exactly forty years, have offended the Almighty.

One can conceive the popularity of such a chant among the masses. It would seem that the writer owed a particular grudge to the innkeepers of his day, since he honours them with a longer notice than any other order of men. For his prolixity in this instance, however, we can easily forgive him, in consideration of the lively sketch of inn-life in the thirteenth century with which he furnishes us. Of its correctness there can be no doubt, for, as a troubadour he must have had opportunities without number of scrutinizing the tricks exercised in hostelries. There is hardly a line in the homely satire of Folquet of Lunel which has not its value. Not the least interesting passage is that in which he gives us a glimpse of public opinion in Provence on the political state of Sicily. To the war then raging in that quarter, the Provençals had to contribute heavily, and with them, therefore, it would be unpopular. Another interesting passage is the one in which the poet refers to the Count of Rodez, not only as correcting the compositions of strollers like himself, but as copying them into a book. Were that volume now in existence, it would be invaluable.

Another very curious servente is one by the Monk of Montaudun, of which we paraphrase a portion, somewhat softened, however. In the original it is the Deity who is made to suggest the compromise between the litigants.

I am a saint of good repute, by mortals called St. Julian;
Being wanted much on earth, I go not oft to lands cerulean,
Yet once of late I made a call which you may term a high call;
I went to heaven to have a chat along with good St. Michael,

But soon the saint was called away, which closed our conversation,
To judge between some dames and monks engaged in disputation.
Paint was the subject of their strife, the rock on which they split;
Each party wanted to monopolise the use of it.
The monks declared, with many tears, that they were ruined quite,
For not an ounce of it was left to keep their pictures bright:
The ladies laid it on so thick, as you well understand,
That the compounders could not quite keep pace with the demand,
And so, unless the former were restrained by stringent law,
Each shrine, they sware, would quickly cease admirers to draw.
Then stepped an ancient beauty forth, and thus to Mike descanted:
"Our sex was painted long before their pictures were invented,
As for myself, how can it hurt or clergyman or saint,
If the crows-feet beneath mine eyes I cover o'er with paint?
In keeping up my beauteous looks I cannot see a crime;
In spite of them I'll still repair the ravages of time."
St. Michael scratched his pate awhile, then, looking very wise.
Said: "Dames and monks, let me suggest, I pray, a compromise,
The soul as well as body, Dames, requires paint and padding;
You should not wholly spend your years in love-making and gadding,
And you, my monks, be less severe, nor bend the bow to breaking,
All dames should have a mod'rate time allotted them for raking,
Then let them paint till forty-five——"
At this the dames looked glum.
"Or fifty," cried the saint, in haste. "Agree, my monks, now, come!"
"No," said the monks, "that cannot be; the time is far too long!
But, though we feel within our souls that compromise is wrong,
Yet, in our deep respect for you, our scruples we will drop,
And let the dames, till thirty-five, frequent the painter's shop,
But only on condition that thereafter they shall cease
To daub, and let us monks enjoy our privilege in peace."
Before the ladies could rejoin, two other saints appeared,
Peter and Lawrence, by the dames no less than monks revered.
They reasoned with the parties, and so well employed their wit,
That they persuaded them at length the difference to split.
The monks agreed to yield five years; the ladies condescended
To take and up to forty paint, and thus the trial ended;
But not the quarrel, for, with much regret, I'm bound to mention,
That to the compact that day formed the dames paid no attention.

The author of the foregoing choice servente, the Monk of Montaudun, was one of the many musical ecclesiastics

employed by the Church to sing against the heretics of the Langue d'Oc. There remains a long piece by Izarn, another of this body, from which may be gleaned some curious particulars respecting the doctrines and practices then attributed to the Vaudois. They were said to believe that the demon was the maker of the human body; that matter was eternal; that there was no resurrection of the body that had sinned and died on earth, but that the blessed soul received a new one in heaven; that after death the sinful soul was doomed to do penance under the form of various animals, at the conclusion of which penance it was allowed to resume its humanity, and therein win salvation; that the doctrine of transubstantiation was erroneous; that marriage was unlawful; and that preachers possessed the powers of blotting out sins and of conferring the Holy Spirit. Izarn laments that these heretics allowed peasants to come fresh from their various avocations to administer the most sacred rites. He describes them as meeting in the woods and thickets; as forming a miscellaneous group of nobles and peasants with the usual predominance of females, and he pictures the ladies Erauda, Bernauda, and Garsenda as sitting weaving or spinning amid humbler dames similarly occupied, while the preacher discourses. He mentions their "bishops" as living in wealth and ease; as possessing much raiment, many luxuries, and numerous friends ready to provide them with whatever they desired; as feeding on the choicest viands, including pastry and distilled waters; as being the custodians of much valuable property; and he contrasts the joyous lives of such men with the hardships to which the preaching friars are exposed; representing the latter as wandering about under all weathers, poorly fed, and scantily clothed, while the latter are making

merry with the sisters and the brethren, and hinting, the while, that these pleasures are not innocent, since he makes these "bishops" exult in the power they enjoy of absolving every sin, however heinous, whether perpetrated by themselves or by other people. The clerical poet also describes these heretics as being well organized, and directed by a consistory whose decrees were ably conceived and strictly obeyed. He mentions, besides, that they had hiding places and strongholds among the mountains, to be used in cases of emergency.

The heretics, no less than the clergy, had their poets, who did them good service. From them, indeed, the Church appears to have learnt that song might be employed with advantage as a controversial weapon. Bertrand of Marseilles, whose story is told in another place, has left a terrible diatribe against the clergy of his day. "False and wicked priests! Treacherous, swearing, lying, stealing, ambitious, debauchees! Your disorders fill the whole world with confusion. What revenues were possessed by St. Peter? What fortunes or estates? Did he ever utter an excommunication? Was any land ever laid under interdict by him? No: he was always just, always held the balance equally; but ye allow it to be weighed down by gold. You inflict your interdicts and your excommunications, and withdraw them for a price! Not that I condemn all clergymen; some, I admit, are worthy. Nor do I make this exception out of fear or favour. I would have all do their duty: I would have them reconcile kings and restore peace to Christendom; I would have them devote their gorgeous robes and their precious vessels and their worldly splendour to the service of the Lord." One would think that nothing stronger could be spoken on the subject, until the still fiercer invective of Guilhem

of Figueras had met his eye. "Rome, that sink of corruption; I know that I shall be blamed for speaking against it; but I cannot hold my peace. It does not amaze me that the whole world is enveloped in sin, for I know how carefully, how earnestly, how incessantly, how widely you have sown the seeds of war and corruption. Blinded as you are, you shear your flock even to the skin! With the Holy Spirit to aid, I will stop your mouth! Rome, more perfidious than all the Greeks; blind leader of the blind, disregarding the rules laid down by Heaven, you sell absolution for money; you load your shoulders with a burden that will sink you down to the pit! It was your infamous sordidness and your incorrigible folly that caused the loss of Damietta! Your principles are abominable; your habits are treacherous. God confound you, Rome!" So the poet goes on enumerating the crimes of the Papacy, and mixing up his accusations with fearful imprecations. He reminds his hearers of the crusade against the Albigenses, and its disastrous results; of the wrongs done to the Counts of Toulouse and Provence, of the miseries inflicted on their subjects, and of the enormities perpetrated by bishops, cardinals, and others holding high places in the Church establishment, pausing now and then to comfort himself with such convictions as—that the power of Rome was declining, and its reign nearly over; or to utter such exclamations as "May all the fiends hurry you off to hell!"

The most contradictory stories are told of this Guilhem of Figueras. By some he is represented as a high born cavalier of great and varied accomplishments, an aristocrat by inclination as well as descent, who was much prized by his order. Others again state that he was a tailor, and the son of a tailor of Toulouse, who

was no less the foe of the nobles than of the priests, and who spent his time exclusively among the common people. Was this discrepancy in the story the result of malicious libel? Or were the Vaudois in the habit of giving the same name to a succession of partisan poets?

At times there were troubadours who attempted to steer a middle course, opposing the heretics with Izarn, and satirising the vices of the orthodox clergy with Guilhem of Figueras. A fair specimen of this class was Raoul of Gassion, whose whole story indeed is so illustrative of life among the poets that we feel bound to transcribe it as told by Nostradamus.

Raoul, lord of the castle of Gassion, was an excellent poet, a great orator, a famous historian, and a very valiant man at arms. On account of his accomplishments and singular merits as a poet, he was always welcome to the great, especially of the clerical order. He wrote against the vices of the latter; but still he strongly maintained their party against the opinions of the Albigenses, and of the Waldenses of Lyons, heretics whose doctrines were current at this period. He associated with the dames and princesses, who took pleasure in Provençal poetry. By them he was much favoured, and from them he received in abundance arms, horses, garments, and money—according to the usual custom. In every expedition of war against the Waldenses, the Tuchins, or other enemies of the Church, he was invariably the first in the affray. Therefore he was greatly esteemed and prized of all. But being a Provençal, it was very right that he should take the side of his sovereign prince and lord, the Count of Provence.* To him then he withdrew, and by him he was well received and esteemed and cherished. This prince, having obtained from the greatest personages of his Court full information of the capacity and skill of Raoul, commissioned him to reduce the rebels of the country who refused to render him homage or obedience. But though Raoul was exalted to a rank so high, Fortune had no mind to let him escape without some experience of her mutability; therefore it happened that while attending an assembly in the city of Montpellier, he fell so

* Nostradamus means that Raoul of Gassion, though a bitter persecutor of the heretics, was still a patriot, and joined his natural chief when the latter had to contend with De Montfort's crusaders.

deeply in love with a lady of the house of Montalban, called Risenda, that he was constrained thereby to falsify all his fine and honourable doings. In praise of this lady he composed various beautiful and learned canzons, and presented them to her. But she, like a false deceiver, cheated him and laughed at him, though this was quite contrary to her usual custom. For she was handsome, prudent, meritorious, and well bred, and delighted much in poetry. Meeting with a deception so incredible and contrary to all his expectations, he became indignant thereat, and soared to such a height of poetic fervour that he composed a song in the form of a century (whatever that may be) all filled with the ingratitude of his lady. Not being able to avenge himself of her in any more honourable way, he abandoned the world, became a monk in a monastery of Avignon, the most austere that he could find, without acquainting any of his relations or friends with his singular and suddenly conceived decision. These, seeing him no longer in his accustomed haunts, made inquiries, and were much astonished to hear that not only had he taken the cowl, but that he had no longer any wish to meet them. The news of this thing quickly reached the ears of the Bishop of Cuserano, papal legate at Avignon, who marvelled much, and hastened at once to see this holy hermit in his cell, where he was not to be spoken to except with his face covered. But the legate, considering how turbulent and calamitous were the times, could not refrain from demonstrating to the new monk, that he could better serve the Pope and the Church at such a period, by prosecuting his enterprises against the enemies of both than he could possibly do by remaining in his present obscurity. He added that had the Pope been apprised of his purpose, he did not doubt but that he would have rewarded him with a conspicuous post, or at least with a valuable living. To all this the poet replied that neither the legate nor any body else ought to be astonished at his calm and deliberate purpose, for that St. Augustine himself had admonished him in a dream to spend the remainder of his life under his rule. He added that in all other things he was the humble servant of His Holiness. Now, while the two were still in conversation, there came to the legate a courier, bearing a letter, empowering him to take measures for filling up an office at Perpignan left vacant by the death of its last possessor. This the legate immediately offered to Raoul, who accepted it with thanks. That same day, by the command and with the dispensation of the legate, the poet quitted the convent and went to take possession of his office, in which he was confirmed by the Count of Provence, who was the patron of the benefice.

Thither then he repaired, and ever afterwards, whether employed by the count or by the Church, he always did his duty. Uc of San Cæsare, speaking in his catalogue of this poet, says, that he was one of the most remarkable men of his time; of beautiful face, calm and graceful; a good poet in all languages (meaning the principal dialects of the Langue d'Oc, as exemplified in a canzon by Rambaud of Vaquieras, to which we have already alluded), but a better poet in the Provençal, and that he had experienced strange and various fortunes. He died of the vexation and grief produced in him by his hatred against a monk of Perpignan.

About as odd a close as such a career could have had.

Among the more stinging satires of the troubadours, we need hardly say, were those in which they dealt with one another. One of the most trenchant was aimed at his principal contemporaries by Peyre d'Auvergne, a troubadour who bore a striking resemblance in body and mind, and in the qualities he lacked no less than in those he possessed, to Malherbe. His pieces show the same force and clearness, the same fastidious care in word-building, the same precision of thought, and the same lack of sensibility and fancy. He also is one of the earliest of the troubadours of whom we possess any notice. Born about 1125, he was still alive in 1214: there being extant one of his pieces in which allusion is made to events occurring in the year just mentioned. His works show that he was well educated for the age, and had acquired a general knowledge of the principal Latin writers. Like so many of his craft, he was a great wanderer, having traversed all the countries between Normandy and Portugal. His works show traces of his Spanish travel in the shape of images that must have been borrowed from the Moors. Nostradamus says, "While he remained in Provence, he had such credit and power with the dames that after having sung to them and recited all his songs, he received in recompence a favour from the one amongst them

who pleased him most, which favour he received many times from the not less fair than worthy dame, Clarette de Baux, daughter of the Lord of Berre." It is said that the minnesänger, Heinrich Von Meissien, better known as Frauenlobh, was borne to his grave by eight beauties, who mingled their tears with wine and poured it over his coffin. Whether the German poet or the Provençal was the more favoured would form a neat subject for a tenzon, if such a thing were in vogue among moderns. Il vecchio Pier d'Alvernia, as Petrarch terms him, in allusion to his patriarchal length of life, wrote as venemously of his brother poets as though he had been in the habit of receiving "favours" from vipers, rather than from charming women:—

There's Peter Rogers writes of love; 'tis but a waste of paper.
Let the cowl'd fool, resigning lute, take up a lighted taper,
And, marching with his brother monks, in chapel drone and pray;
The world is weary of his song, or, rather, of his bray.

Old Borneil, with his dreary face and still more dreary rhyme,
Is like a sheet that's worn threadbare and all bestained by time.
Yet he pretends, the senseless owl! for counts and lords to sing!
His lays just suit the beldames that draw water from the spring.

There's Bernard of Ventadour loves a countess and a queen!
It makes me laugh to think of what he is and what has been.
His spiritless, dough-thumping sire was even at that a sloven,
And his mamma—fine dame, ha! ha! chop'd wood to heat the oven!

Hoarse Brival, with his nasal twang, should scream along the street,
"I'm all the way from Palestine and have no bread to eat!"
He is the scoff, the butt, the laugh alike of rich and poor.
A pilgrim he, sure, ought to be, and not a troubadour.

This anticipation of the "Dunciad," which continues in the same coarse strain for many stanzas, must be pronounced elegance itself when compared with the tirade of the Monk of Montmayor, a genius who richly merited his title of "Scourge of the Poets." In the

application of epithets he surpasses Falstaff himself. He is never at a loss for a term, and never runs himself out of breath. He calls Rudel a vile mountaineer, with a vulgar liking for raw onions; Peyre of Vernigo, a peasant clown of consummate coarseness and ignorance; Elias of Bargiol, a fellow who wrote without rhyme or reason; Guilhem of Agoult, an accomplished libertine; Arnaud Daniel, a lover of obscurity; Guilhem Adhemar, a bad soldier, a worse poet, and a greater liar than Peyre Vidal himself; Folquet of Marseilles, a merchant who, attempting to enrich himself by making a false oath, was discovered, tried, and convicted of perjury; Rambaud of Vaquieras, a fool; Aubert of Pucibot, a hypocrite; Guilhem of Cabestaing, a stupid coward; Pons of Capdueil, a plagiarist; Laufranc Cicala, a stupid stutterer; Giraud of Borneil, an old drake quacking in the sunshine, and so forth. This might be regarded as mere vituperation, were there not evidence to show that the Monk of Montmayor merely repeated what others had said before him, and that in many instances the ugly terms he applies so liberally were not quite undeserved. We know from other sources that Arnaud Daniel really was obscure; that Rambaud of Vaquieras bore the unenviable reputation of a fool; and that Guilhem Adhemar really had failed as a soldier. We may fairly surmise, then, that the conduct of Guilhem of Agoult was not quite in harmony with the exalted sentiments expressed in his sonnets, and that Folquet of Marseilles really had been involved in some unpleasant transaction which gave some colour to the piece of scandal adopted by the satirist.

The servente makers and publishers were allowed a good deal of licence, or it may be presumed that none of them would have been willing to accept, much less

exult in, such a title as the "Flagellator of Tyrants," like Guilhem of Figueras. Still this licence had a limit, as not a few of them found to their cost, by forfeiting life or limb to the vengeance of some of their victims. Thus the first Marchebrus was murdered by some gentleman whom he had gibbeted in his sirventes; Ricard of Noves, a bitter foe of Papal power, was subjected to a punishment theretofore reserved for clerks guilty of a certain crime, and thrown into a well; and Boniface of Castellane, a warrior and a patriot, but still more dreaded by the French lords of Provence as a poet, lost his head on the scaffold, on account of the rebellious tendency of his lyrics. Some of these satirists, however, knew well how to apply the salve of a well timed eulogium to the wound inflicted by a servente, when this wound threatened to extend to their own persons. Such a one was Bertrand d'Alamon, "lord of the place so called, and a man very worthy of honour. He was learned, a good Provençal, poetic, fertile of fancy, and fluent of tongue and pen. His sweet and modest conversation and his vein of poetry rendered him generally agreeable. He made many fine pieces, and was enamoured of Fanetta of Romanini, a lady who held open court of love in her castle, and who was also the aunt of Petrarch's Laura. In praise of Fanetta he wrote many excellent rhymes; nor did he ever interrupt his songs of love, unless to write satirically and to speak scandalously of princes, not sparing even his own sovereign, Charles II., king of Naples and Count of Provence. On this account the king deprived him of a right that his ancestors had enjoyed for ages, in the passage of salt by the bridge of Pertus over the river Durance." The Alamons were the owners of the bridge, and levied a heavy toll on the salt, which was

monopoly. The loss was a heavy one to the poet, and, while smarting therefrom, "he made a servente, in which he complained that there passed no more salt through his gates," and indulged in several very small witticisms and quaint conceits by way of introduction. In the body of the servente he contrived to range over all the more important political events of the day, and thus found occasion for flattering the house of Anjou and striking very hard at its foes. "On account of this servente, which was presented to Charles at the suggestion of his son Robert, his right over the salt was restored to Bertrand. Also Robert, who was a lover of Provençal poetry, seeing that this servente was full of singularity and grace, took the author into his service, inscribed his name on the roll of the gentlemen of his Court, and made much use of him in Provence. Besides this, he enriched him with valuable gifts and made him seneschal of Provence and custodian of the rights, as tolls, etc., that the king, his father, possessed over the market-place of Rognes."*

The servente was the recognized medium of satire, but every other species of poetry could be bent to the same purpose. There is an instance in which Sordel, displaying as much perverse ingenuity as the worthy who turned that model tome, "The Whole Duty of Man," into a libel on the whole parish,† contrived that the most lachrymose of all ditties, the elegy, should utter the most venomous of diatribes.

> And ask ye why my sighs ascend,
> And why my tears are shed?
> The gen'rous lord, the trusty friend,
> Blacas the Good is dead.

* Bouches du Rhône; five leagues N.N.E. of Aix.

† By writing the name of a neighbour opposite each sin therein denounced.

Some recompense I'll try to find
For all that I have lost,
In sharing what he's left behind
'Mong those that need it most.

His gen'rous heart, his valiant heart,
His noble heart among
The kings I'll share, that each a part
May swallow and be strong.

And first the Kaisar it shall taste;
He needs it to regain
The lands that, from his German host,
The Milanese have ta'en.

King Lewis next a share may claim;
We know he needs it much,
If his mamma, whom more than shame
He dreads, will let him touch.

In turn the island's royal thrall
Thereon shall breakfast twice;
His need's so great, his soul so small,
One piece would not suffice.

Castile's Fernando then I warn
To eat—that he may bear
His losses and his barons' scorn;
He needs a double share.

The last our two weak counts I'll serve;
To each I'll give enough
Their feeble hands and hearts to nerve,
The Tournois to thrust off.

But, to our thinking, Sordel did much better when he confined the elegy to its legitimate purpose, as in the following example :—

To whom shall now our songs be sung?
Our passion now be said?
As if their funeral knell were rung,
We count them with the dead.

Alas! and must we, Count of mine,
Our souls to sorrow give!
Since wanting those yon cells confine,
It is not life to live.

Ah! never more shall their sweet tones,
My Count, delight our ears;
They now are chanting orisons,
While we are shedding tears!

But, wherefore do we mourning stand?
And what do tears avail?
'Twere better far, with armed hand,
Their prison to assail.

My Count, let's fire the place at once,
And burn it—cells and towers—
And thus unshrine the vile St. Pons,
Who robs us of our flowers.

In vain! in vain! No human hand
May snatch them from their fate!
They pine among the cloistered band,
And we are desolate.

In similar strain, though hardly of equal merit, is an elegy by Aymerie of Beauvoir:—

Sanchez is dead! ah, woe is me!
I cannot sing for sighing;
Or if I do—alas, 'twill be
As sings the swan in dying.

With mournful tears mine eyes are dim,
My heart is pierced with sorrow;
The dirge I weave to-day for him
Will serve for me to-morrow.

I weep not for the Good and Brave,
For he is blest in Heaven;
But all I've buried in his grave—
To that my plaints are given.

We have already described the structure of the canzon

and remarked that it was applied to many subjects. It might sing of war as well as of love; and it might be employed to inculcate rules of etiquette, as well as high moral principles, as we shall have occasion to notice when we come to discuss the influence of the troubadours on society. To the various specimens of the canzon given in other places, we add a nearly literal version of one by the Countess Die:—

A painful song I sing. Woe is me! I must complain of the one whom I love more than all the world beside. With him, and him only, my beauty, my grace, my wit, and even —— are ineffectual. I am deceived, betrayed, abandoned, contemned, like one guilty of some great crime!

But this at least consoles me, dearest, that to you I never failed in one tittle. I have always loved you, shall ever love you, more than Seguin loved Valence. Yes; it pleases me to think that I surpass you in tenderness as much as you surpass me in every brilliant quality. Why are you so amiable to all the world, and cold only to me?

Your severity amazes and tortures me! Why should it not? No; it is not right that another lady, be she ever so fascinating, should steal your heart away from me. Do you remember the beginning of our affection? God preserve me from being the cause of its rupture!

Your noble nature and your lofty rank reassure me. Right well am I aware that no lady of any country, far or near, could make a better choice than yourself. But, dearest, you who know so much of love, can you not divine who is the most tender and sincere of women? Have you forgotten the time when ——?*

I might trust something to my rank; something also to my attractions; and still more to the intensity of my affection.

To you, dear love, wherever you may be, I send this song, the messenger and interpreter of my heart. Oh! my handsome, my amiable darling, I am dying to know why you treat me so sternly, so barbarously! What is the cause? Is it hatred? Can it be pride? Let this closing verse remind you of the terrible effects often caused by obduracy and pride.

We have now to notice a pleasing variety of Provençal

* There are blanks in our paraphrase, because the Countess Die wrote, times, as unreservedly as Catullus.

poetry, of which, unfortunately, we possess but few remains. In one of these Peyre d'Auvergne introduces a lover as commissioning a nightingale to bear a message to his mistress. "Away, sweet bird," cries the swain, "seek the lady I love, reveal to her my feelings, discover hers, and win her to say that I am not forgotten. Speed on thy way! Pause not nor turn aside! Then be sure to hasten back with glad tidings! There is none so dear to me, nor any from whom I desire so earnestly to hear." The bird obeys, shoots away like an arrow, reaches the desired spot, discovers the lady reclining in an arbour, and attracts her attention by warbling his sweetest notes—those with which he is wont to welcome the earliest twinkle of the evening star. Then he addresses the lady in human voice, tells her whence he comes and from whom, and having thus delivered his message faithfully, requests an answer. The lady continuing silent, the nightingale proceeds to remonstrate. "Embrace love while it is offered," whispers he. "Seize the happy moment; it is a flower that quickly fades." It is precisely the argument which an exquisite English lyrist, Herrick, has thus expressed:—

> Gather your rosebuds while ye may!
> Old time is still aflying;
> And that same flower that blooms to-day,
> To-morrow may be dying.

The lady, who had only paused because she could not at once find terms suiting the strength of her feelings, then replies in very loving terms. The nightingale returns, meeting with no mishap on the way, and delights his master with the following tender message: "Your pretty bird came straight to me. I heard him with delight. My love, your absence pains me much. You are dearer to me than all that the world contains.

Why were you so ready to leave me? Had I foreseen your intended departure I would have delayed your happiness, and thus detained you by my side a little longer. Much I regret that I did not do so. Your absence oppresses my heart with sadness: I breathe nothing but sighs. Were you with me, all would be happiness; I would not give you up for all the world. Love is like gold; the more it is tried the purer does it become. Such love is mine. Fly away, beautiful bird! Let him know how dear he is to me; nor forget to use thy sweetest tones."

The foregoing fable was evidently borrowed from the Moors, with whom old Peyre often came in contact during his rambles. So also was the story composed by Arnaud of Carcasses, of which we paraphrase some portions.

THE PARROT.

Upon the summit of a hill
There stood a lordly castle;
Its battlements were guarded well
By steel-clad knight and vassal.

A lovely patch of garden-ground
Extended far behind it;
A lofty wall begirt it round,
And there were men to mind it.

There spread the forest tree its gloom,
There pear and apple grew,
There flourished flowers of rich perfume,
And flowers of beauty too.

Cool grottos were there and pretty nooks,
And boats for who loved rowing,
For 'neath the shades, and through the glades,
A dozen streams were flowing.

'Twas noontide in the summer's prime
Without a cloud or breeze,
A sweltering moment—just the time
To shelter 'neath the trees.

When one with a bewitching face,
And clad in raiment fine,
Upon the grass reclined her grace,
Beneath a pine to pine.

* * * *

He was a very ancient knight,
His muscles shrunk to gristles;
A stoop diminished much his height;
His beard was naught but bristles.

His voice was hoarse, his mind was coarse;
A gruff, ungainly blade; he
Was not, you know, the kind of beau,
To please a pretty lady.

* * * *

She pined—but wherefore? Tell I can't;
She wanted—what? I know not.
Perhaps it was some pretty plant
That in such gardens grow not.

While musing sad a sound she heard,
A pair of pinions flapping;
And looking up, beheld a bird
Among the branches hopping.

'Twas not a daw, 'twas not a rook,
And it was not a dove;
Its beak was shaped just like a hook,
In hue it was "a love."

A glittering eye, a saucy way——
But fearing lest I mar it
In awkward effort to portray,
I'll say at once—a parrot.

That it was so the lady knew,
Though she had never seen one;
Which demonstrates, whate'er its hue,
That she was not a *green one.*

* * * *

"The prettiest youth on earth that moves,
Antiphanor they call him,
Has sent to say that you he loves,
And will, whate'er befall him.

"He's tall and straight; he's fresh and bright;
He's gentle and he's hearty;
He's just the very opposite
Of yonder ancient party.

"A fairer or more gen'rous knight
You never heard or read on.
He bade me say that—well-a-day!—
He loves the ground you tread on.

"He vows you have the sweetest eye
That ever lit a face,
And he avers he's sure to die,
Unless you grant him grace.

"He says his heart, if you deny,
Will snap just like a carrot,
A thread that's singed, or crust of pie——"
"Be off! you naughty parrot!

"You're very bold such speech to hold
Unto a married woman!
I will not list, and——
Hist! hist! whisht!!!
I hear my husband coming!"

"Pooh!" said the parrot, "it is naught,
Except some rabbits playing.
The rustling sward your ear has caught—
And then, as I was saying—

"My lord and you, sweet girl, would make
A pair——"
"I will not listen!
So just this answer back you'll take,
That I'll be none of his'n.

"Besides, I never saw the youth.
As I'm a wedded madam,
I would not, parrot, of a truth,
Him recognize from Adam!"

"He's rich—"
"For that I do not care."
"Him love!"
"Oh no! I must not dare."

"I pray you do! Of love for you,
I know his heart is quite full;
If here were he, instead of me,
You'd find him so delightful."

"Now hold your prate! To him who sent
At once I bid you hie, sir."
"If you agree to his intent,
And none need be the wiser!

"Ten thousand ladies do the same,
Ten thousand more will do it;
They dread, being prudent, naught of shame,
Nor e'er have cause to rue it."

* * * *

And thus the talk 'twixt dame and bird
That summer day proceeded—
Until to love her heart was stirred
The youth for whom he pleaded.

"Since you insist it must be so,"
Exclaimed at length the lady.
"You may unto your master go
And say that I am ready

To yield my heart, when he has knelt
And all his passion spoken;
And bear this ring and broidered belt,
To him thereof in token."

"Thanks," said the bird, and took the things
"And now unto my master,
Fast as I came I'll ply my wings——"
"No," said the lady—"faster!"

The parrot flew the thin air through;
He passed o'er lake and mountain;
Until his master's form he knew,
Reclined beside a fountain.

* * * *

He mounts his steed; the bird decides
Within his breast to nestle;
And thus away the lover rides
Unto his lady's castle.

High soars the parrot in the air,
And vaults across the towers;
And soon he sees the lady fair
Reclining 'mid the flowers.

"In vain you come!" the beauty cries,
And then she fell aweeping;
"If he is seen, your master dies!
My spouse strict watch is keeping."

"The doors are locked, the keys are placed—
Ah me!—his pillow under;
If we are caught I'll be disgraced,
And he'll be torn asunder."

Replied the bird, "Pray do not fear!
Nor you nor he shall have ill;
Here let me whisper in your ear
How I'll this coil unravel."

* * * *

She smiled and nodded, said "I'll be
Ready beside yon gate."
"Good!" said the bird, and off flew he
To where his master sat.

Then three words more—it might be four—
The knight burst out alaughing.
I fancy that the naughty bird
Had been what you call—"chaffing."

Then up he sprang, and down he threw
Upon each lofty spire,
A horrid something, blazing blue,
That people call—Greek fire.

I wo'n't, because I can't, say how
The bird the thing had got;
The story only says that now
He poured it from a pot.

The stuff sticks fast where'er it falls,
And very soon it raises,
Upon the roof and o'er the walls,
Not one, but fifty blazes.

The bells ring out, the people shout,
There is a fearful pother;
They mount about, inside and out,
And try the flames to smother.

Garden and chamber watched no more,
The wily bird discovers;
He steals the keys and opes the door,
And there we leave the lovers.

* * * *

At length, by aid of vinegar,
Preserved in sundry places
For time of need, the crowds succeed
In putting out the blazes.

The smoke subsides, clears up the air—
Then o'er the treetops darting,
The watchful parrot warns the pair
That they must think of parting.

They part—'tis in the usual way,
And needless to portray it—
But first the lady has her say,
Exactly as I say it.

"Adventures seek for love of me;
I want a knight to brag on.
Of giants slaughter two or three,
Besides a fiery dragon.

"Then, there are lands where men they bake,
Though many folk deny it;
I'd like to know if it be so,
So just to please me, try it!

"I'd like a petted Crocodile,
I'd like a servile demon,
A unicorn—at least his horn;
All these are things I dream on.

"I'd like a phœnix or a fay,
Or satyr to keep by me;
You're sure to meet them by the way,
So do, now, gratify me—
There's a dear—y!"

The knight said "Yes," and, bowing low,
His fiery courser spurred off;
But whether he did these things, or no,
Is what I never heard of.

That the poetry of mediæval Provence derived its peculiarities from the Moors there cannot be a doubt. It is Eastern in nearly all respects, and in form as well as character. The prototype of every species of lyric in use among the troubadours is to be found in the poetry of the Spanish Moors, of their Arab progenitors, or of the cognate races. The Bible, for example, abounds with poetry similar in form and general purpose to the servente, the canzon, the frottola and the tenzon. No serventes more terribly severe were ever penned than the fifty-second, fifty-eight, and sixty-ninth psalms. From the same book, too, many admirable specimens of the canzon, commiato included, might be selected. Then, the Bible contains a whole book of frottole, elegies in abundance, and even ballads. In Exodus, xv. 20, 21, there is notice of a ballad sung in the dance; and, besides many isolated examples scattered through the prophetic writings, the books of Canticles and of Job are collections of tenzons. The tenzon, indeed, is emphatically Eastern. Poetical contests were passionately courted by the Arabs; Mohammed was renowned for excellence therein previous to his assumption of the prophetic mantle. In Arabia, and generally in Western Asia, these contests were carried to an excess, and included an element of excitement unknown to the Provençals. The poets often staked their lives on the issue of the dispute, and the loser had mostly to pay the forfeit. Among them the tenzon was often turned into a means of destroying a dangerous rival. Rules of composition, even more strict than those in use among

the Provençals, were current in the East, and the first to infringe these rules was declared vanquished. Among the few notices extant of the adventures of Ferdousy, the Persian Homer, is an anecdote relating to his risks in a tenzon. At the court of Mahmoud the Gaznavide he was defied to a poetical struggle by three rivals. Every verse was to contain four lines, of which each poet in turn was to supply one, and the same rhyme was to be adhered to through the verse. The antagonists of Ferdousy terminated their lines with the syllable *schem*, fully believing that there were but three words in the Persian language which ended thus. But the extensive reading of Ferdousy enabled him to supply a fourth, in the name of an almost forgotten character, Pischem. For the fiercest of these contests, however, we must examine German history. The Teutonic minstrels, who were most decided imitators of the Troubadours in all respects, delighted in them. It is said that Herman, Langrave of Thuringia, once held a minstrel show in his castle of the Wartburg, wherein he offered a prize to the most excellent. The award, however, was obstinately disputed, and excited an acrimonious feud between two of the most renowned singers of the Fatherland, Heinrich von Ofterdingen and Wolfram von Eschenbach. These two determined at length to bring their hostility to an end in a poetical contest, wherein death was to be the penalty of defeat. The struggle came off in the Wartburg in 1207. The ancient hall was crowded with celebrities; and beside the minstrels stood the headsman and his assistants, ready to do their office on the defeated champion. We have the whole picture in our mind's eye. The singers facing each other with intensest hatred, and around them a crowd of dames and cavaliers full of that

vigorous life which rejoices in contests wherein life is the stake. Unfortunately, the progress and issue of the struggle is uncertain. The narrators seem to have beheld it through a glass and very darkly. According to them, the strife was rather musical than poetical, and Wolfram vanquished by a mechanical trick whichd rew sounds of unusual richness from his instrument. Heinrich of Ofterdingen, however, managed to save his life, for the Langravine Sophia flung her mantle over him, and there was none there who dared to perpetrate the sacrilege of tearing him from such a shelter. The story closes with a tale of wizard interposition, which we leave to the contempt it merits. In our opinion, the whole narrative has been deeply tinged with hues borrowed from the Provençal artists. The story of the mantle we believe to have been borrowed from the Langue d'Oc. Among some of the valleys of the Pyrenees it really was customary to pardon the felon condemned to death who could manage to break his fetters, or to wrench himself from the grasp of the executioner, and take refuge with the lady of the manor.

The Spanish Moors produced examples of the tenzon long before this or any other species of what have been fittingly termed *vers de société*, became habitual to their Gallic neighbours. The magnificent Abderrahman II. delighted to pass the time he could snatch from cares of State in such pleasing exercises of the intellect, along with his favourite, the poet Abdallah ben Zamri. One of these canzons originated in a dispute which made some noise at the Court of Cordova. In a tender moment the monarch cast a necklace of incalculable value round the neck of the beautiful Zeluca. His councillors blamed his extravagance, representing that the gems would have been better placed in the treasury,

as a provision for one of the political emergencies that were perpetually recurring. Abderrahman blamed the sordid-mindedness of his councillors; and he and Zamri contended which of the two could the better excuse the gift.

ABDERRAHMAN.

They shine, indeed, but can they feel?
Or to my sighing lend an ear?
Have they a smile like hers to heal
My wounds of heart? a voice to cheer?
They value things of little worth,
Despising what of life's the pearl.
Ah, what are all the gems of earth
Compared unto my charming girl?

ZAMRI.

Oh! Caliph, count me not of those
In form but not in feelings human,
Who think the world a treasure shows
Surpassing blushing, blooming woman.
Of all the earth contains, or sea,
Of jewels, woman still is rarest:
And that fair girl who smiles on thee,
My Caliph, is of woman fairest.

ABDERRAHMAN.

As sweet thy verse, my Zamri, flows
As breeze across the flow'ry heath,
Or as the perfume of the rose,
Or almost as my beauty's breath.
My heart is hers, and hers mine eyes;
Ah! were they mine—thus would I use them;
I'd string them, Zamri, jewel-wise
To form a pendant for her bosom.

We may observe that the Eastern extravagance of the closing lines of this tenzon has many parallels among the Provençal odes.

The Spanish Moors were even more extreme in their love of song than their trans-Pyrenean neighbours. They never used simple prose where there was a possibility

of employing verse. The latter they applied to the most unpromising, and, as a northern mind would consider, uncongenial subjects. Logical discourses, essays on physical science, and even lingual manuals, were composed in metre. Among many such monstrosities they possessed the Alpha, a renowned treatise on grammar, and the Zamial, a treatise equally renowned on the conjugations! With the Moors, even more than with the Provençals, the study of poety was universal, and bards by profession were numerous. And among them, even more than among the Provençals, were the praises of the poet appreciated, and his censures dreaded. Consequently, the Moors, even more than the Provençals were given to rewarding panegyric, and averting satire by boundless liberality to the sons of song. It was no uncommon thing for a Moorish or an Oriental poet to make his fortune through a single piece opportunely sung. It is told of the renowned Haroun al Raschid, that a quarrel with a favourite mistress having involved him in melancholy ominous of series results, and this quarrel having been terminated by the song of a poet, the latter was rewarded with forty thousand pieces of gold! It is also told of a vanquished Moorish prince, that being on his way to hopeless captivity, he bestowed thirty-six pieces of gold, the last remains of all his former wealth, on a poet who presented him with an ode regretting his fall. Of the same prince another story is related even more illustrative of the love of the Moors for minstrelsy. He was once the chief of the dynasty of the Almohades, and the mightiest prince of Moorish Spain. In his contest with the monarchs of Castile, then becoming formidable, he was short-sighted enough to summon to his aid a new horde of desert-born fanatics, the Almoravides. The latter came at the call,

swept back the Christians for a time, and then, turning their swords against their employer, fixed themselves as masters in the Moslem portion of the Peninsula. Long before this had occurred, the Almohadis became apprehensive of the results of his imprudence, though hardly yet conceiving that it could result, as it did, in the utter ruin of his family. In this state of mind he dreamed a dream, as oracular as the dreams of Eastern magnates have ever been, and still more remarkable, in that it deserves a place beside the vision of the damsel playing on a dulcimer, that visited the pillow of that glorious visionary, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. In the dream of the Almohadis a mournful peri made its appearance bearing a guitar, and playing a plaintive air. It sang to him as follows, and three times over, for so often did it visit his slumbers in that one night :—

Once did'st thou ride a conquering king,
In Fortune's gilded car ;
And Fame delighted then to sing
Thy glories near and far.

But Fortune is no longer thine,
Her hand has laid thee low ;
And Fame thy name no more shall twine,
Save in a tale of woe.

Thy pleasures all have passed away
Like bubbles from the stream ;
The greatness thine but yesterday
Has vanished like a dream.

The servente was a renowned Moorish institution. Abdul Walid ben Abdallah, one of the many lovers of the poetical princess Validhata, is said to have used a satire against his rivals as effectively as ever Justice of the Peace used the Riot Act against a quarrelsome mob, dispersing them to all quarters from their pursuit

of the beauty. A fair illustration of the esteem entertained for satiric poets by the Spanish Moors is supplied by the following anecdote. Solyman, the Cadi of Merida (A.D. 900), having been removed from his post by Abdallah, monarch of Toledo, he revenged himself by publishing a fierce invective against the prince. The piece excited much attention, and the author was soon discovered. When he was brought before Abdallah, the latter assumed a bantering tone. "My dear Solyman," said he to the poet, "I hardly think that I merit your reproaches. Still, I do not mean to punish you for your poetry; quite the contrary. You shall even have the honour of reciting your compositions before me whenever I may happen to be in the mood to hear them. This, I doubt not, will be often, for you are afflicted with the disease of jingling, and I am afflicted with the kindred disease of liking the jingle. As you know, I value all poetry, and yours more than that of anybody else—so highly, indeed, that I consider one line of yours well worth a thousand pieces of gold. *And that sum, my good Solyman, I mean you to pay me for every line you may henceforth compose.*"

Like the troubadours, the Moorish singers were in the habit of giving pet names to their mistresses. The great Abderrahman, who was not less renowned as a poet than as a warrior and a statesman, called his chief sultana "the Light of the World" long before the term was used by Moore's hero.

As among the troubadours, so there were among the Moors many ladies of high rank, like Validhata, who could wrap up a declaration of love in a copy of verses, Thus wrote Abassa, the sister of Haroun al Raschid, to the celebrated vizier—indeed, the most celebrated of all viziers—Graffer, who was her lover :—

Ah ! if you ask what stains you trace
Upon this scroll of mine,
'Tis Modesty would fain efface,
With tears, each glowing line.

I cannot quench, howe'er I try,
This soul consuming flame;
And yet how speak it? I must die
Either of Love or Shame.

I'll tear the scroll, lest it betray
My secret; but reply,
How can I die of love nor say
That 'tis for you I die?

The sentiments expressed in these lines are such as were uttered a thousand times over, in after days, by the Provençals. We have the report of a conversation between Beatrice of Montferrat and Rambaud of Vaquieras, in which the latter repeats the ideas of Abassa's last stanza.

The Moslems too delighted in pretty fables, in which birds and animals appear as actors, and we are quite sure that their Gallic neighbours borrowed largely from these fables. There can be no doubt as to the Moorish origin of the story of the Parrot of which we have given a paraphrase. The picture of a lady secluded under watch and ward, and of the employment of Greek fire, applies only to the East. We cannot find the smallest approach to harem life among the Provençals. And Greek fire and its antidote, vinegar, were things altogether unknown to Western warfare.*

The causes of the decline of Provençal poetry may be summed up very shortly. Its rise and prosperity were caused by communication with the Moors; by the excitement of the crusades; by the rivalry between the dialects of the Langue d'Oc, which extended, as already

* There is one exception. In 1148, Geoffrey Plantagenet used Greek fire at the siege of Montreuil-Bellay.

remarked, from the Ebro to the Po; and by the social state of the peoples inhabiting this stretch of country. In the course of a century all these conditions underwent a material change. The fervour of the crusades subsided long before the close of the thirteenth century. In that century too, the Moors ceased to exercise any influence, literary or otherwise, over their neighbours of France. And in that century two important sections were broken off for ever from the Langue d'Oc. The progress of the Christian dominions in Spain turned the attention and the sympathy of the people of Aragon and Catalonia to the westward, and tended to sever them from the Provençals. It tended, also, to impoverish and weaken the Moors, and, therefore, to depose them from that pitch of social and intellectual excellence which had rendered them so influential. During the very same period, the growth of its cities and the development of its native poetry un-Provençalized Italy. Thus, the Langue d'Oc being contracted to the lands lying between the Bay of Biscay, the Alps, and the Mediterranean, and no longer regarded as a centre by the Lombards and the Catalans, many powerful stimulants to the attainment of intellectual superiority were withdrawn. Besides, the same century beheld a great and disastrous change in the social and political system of the Provençals. French domination fixed feudalism in the land, and destroyed for ever that commercial and individual independence which has always been so favourable to the growth of genius. But Provence was not even allowed to retain its native genius. The capitals of the country were no longer Toulouse, Montpellier, and Marseilles. Up to the middle of the fourteenth century they were Paris and Naples. After that the capital was Paris only. For two centuries, therefore,

Provençal intellect was divided between Italy and France. Eventually, it gave itself wholly up to the latter, allowing its native language to fall into the degradation of a *patois*, and its native literature to become an antiquarian *curiosity*.

# COURTS OF LOVE

MANY things which modern society abandon to public opinion, or to the sense of propriety of individuals, were controlled during the middle ages by popular institutions. We have no punishment for the ungrateful, the avaricious, the domestic tyrant, the disagreeable neighbour, or the person whose life is a crying scandal, save one that is little regarded by its objects, reprobation. Among the men of the past it was strikingly different; they dealt with such persons as prescription directed, and in a way that was not the less severe because it happened to be thoroughly grotesque. This was especially the fact in the countries south of the Loire. Therein abounded potentates, bearing ridiculous titles, who were elected by the mob, and who exercised considerable power over delinquents beyond the reach of graver tribunals. For instance: In Peregueux, the King of Caitiffs was empowered to unroof the house of the man who allowed his wife to usurp his authority; at Chailly "the boys," a term including the male "children of larger growth," had the privilege of dressing wife-beaters ridiculously and parading them for several hours on the backs of asses, every first of May; and on the same day, at Autun, the King of Fools and his merry men were accustomed to duck scolds, slanderers, drunkards, etc., in the Bishop's Well.

The social system which delighted in such things was precisely the one to devise and cherish the Court of Love. When and how this singular tribunal originated we have found it impossible to determine. It first attracts our attention during the crusades; and there can be no doubt that it owes most of its more striking characteristics, and all its glory, to these wars. In the crusades the men of the Langue d'Oc took a leading part from beginning to end. Within their borders the first of these expeditions was decided upon, at the Council of Clermont. A native of the Langue d'Oc, Adhemar, Bishop of Puy, represented the Pope in that expedition. A prince of the Langue d'Oc, Raymond of Toulouse, was its wealthiest and most powerful chief. Besides founding the great military order of the Hospital, the men of the Langue d'Oc monopolised two of the eight languages into which that order was finally divided; they filled the office of Grand Commander, which took precedence on shore, and the office of Grand Marshal, which took precedence at sea; and up to the opening of the sixteenth century, they furnished just one half of the Grand Masters. It is stated that the Langue d'Oc sent a hundred thousand warriors to the first crusade; and it is certain that it continued to feed "the World's Debate" with an extraordinary proportion of recruits. St. Bernard spoke in borrowed phrase, full of Oriental exaggeration, when he boasted that the second crusade had deprived Europe of six-sevenths of its men. Still the consumption of manhood in this fierce and protracted struggle must have been enormous. And there resulted therefrom, in lands enthusiastic for crusade, among which Provence and the bordering countries thereof held unquestioned pre-eminence, a repetition of that which should not have astonished the

conquerors of Troy, when, after toiling through weary siege and still more weary storm, they returned to find—

> Che le lor donne à li tormenti
> Di tanta assentia, havean preso remedio—
> Tutte s'havean giovini amanti eletti. ARIOSTO, xx. 10.

On this state of things we have no wish to dilate. In it, however, the Court of Love played decidedly a restraining part. It recognized existing gallantry, and, so far as lay within its power, legalised it. But it insisted on unswerving fidelity to a single lover; it promoted lofty sentiment and discountenanced mere appetite; and it stamped with opprobrium those who disregarded its regulations. Thus it offered a formidable barrier to coarse and indiscriminate licentiousness.

Had the Court of Love done no more it would have merited some respect. But this that we have mentioned was by no means the whole, nor even the better portion of its work. It is admitted that the state of society is determined by the position of woman therein. Wherever the female is a plaything or a drudge, the male is fierce, treacherous, and cruel. There nothing desirable is to be gained or preserved without chicanery and violence; and there, consequently, shameless fraud and ruffianly force reign despotic. No great knowledge of history is requisite to show that fraud and force were precisely the characteristics of the period immediately preceding the crusades. The Court of Love changed all this. It taught that affection was to be the prize of worth; that woman was to be wooed, deferred to, and cherished; and that there were seasons wherein the strong were to rely no longer on their strength, and wherein victory was to be won by generous devotion and graceful submission. Circumstances gave it the power of enforcing its teach-

ings; it developed taste, elegance, and all the milder virtues: and it ended by communicating a polish to society theretofore unknown. The mistress and the cavalier servente indeed, as well as the Court of Love, disappeared with the crusades. But the wife inherited all the graceful prerogatives of the former, and the husband all the high-toned sentiment of the latter. She could never again degenerate into the mere directrix of the spinsters or chief of the handmaidens. And he, unlike his rude ancestors, who endeavoured to satisfy their thirst for renown by meriting such epithets as "Ironsides," "Hammer," "Wolf," and even "Devil," sought thenceforth and above all things, to be distinguished as a *gentle*-man.

Unrecognized by the legislator and altogether opposed to the teachings of the priest, the Courts of Love possessed neither chartered rights nor fixed seats, nor any support but popular opinion. Their numbers, therefore, were continually fluctuating. They died to-day to revive to-morrow; they vanished from one quarter to reappear in another, according to the characters of the leading dames in each locality. Sometimes a brilliant court disappeared for ever with its foundress; sometimes it was maintained in prosperity for ages, by a long succession of similar minds. Here it was a petty thing, that included only the wives and daughters of a few insignificant squires; there it was the magnificent assemblage of the noblest dames of a great province. At one period we find these courts multitudinous south of the Loire, and even extending northwards to Champagne and Flanders, and eastward as far as Palestine; at another time we find them receding to the narrow territory on the left bank of the Rhone, taking refuge at Tarascon, Romani, Avignon,

Segni, etc., where eventually they withered under the frigid rule of the northern monarchs.

Each Court of Love consisted of a president and a council. It is a statement often made that the number composing the council was invariable, but for this there is no foundation in the older writers. According to André, the chaplain, one of the judgments of the Countess of Champagne was issued with the approval of "sixty ladies," and another with the approval of "a great number." Writing of the Council of Pierrefeu and Segni, an amalgamated thing, Nostradamus gives the names of the ladies who composed it at "this time" (the close of the twelfth century), a phrase evidently meaning that there was no fixed number. Of the Council of Romani, he states that it was formed "of a certain number of ladies of the country, among whom were the following," and then he mentions twelve. And of the Council of Avignon he specifies fourteen, "who," as he adds, "together with others of the principal ladies flourishing at Avignon, during the residence therein of the Papacy, held open Court of Love."

Another erroneous statement is that the Courts of Love were composed exclusively of ladies. There are instances on record wherein a fair proportion of the members, including the president, were gentlemen. These courts were held, in the towns, at the Hôtel de Ville; in the country, in a castle hall, or, during the summer, under a patriarchal tree. Sometimes the pleadings were oral, and sometimes the arguments were submitted to the court in writing. It would seem that an appeal lay from a court of little fame, to one wherein the dames were of the highest rank and reputation. The decisions of the latter were final, and, besides, regarded as precedents. They were seldom

disobeyed, since contempt of court was punished by expulsion from society. Nor was there anything arbitrary in these awards; every one of them was a logical deduction from the Code of Love.* This code, which formed the manual of judges and suitors, consisted of thirty-one articles, and was said to have originated as follows: Once upon a time, somewhere in that period of cloud and storm known to romance as the reign of Arthur, a Breton knight besought the love of a Breton damsel. In those days love was never gratuitous; it was necessary to purchase it by feats of dash and daring, in which the lover had to risk his neck a hundred times a day before he could climb to the lips of his mistress. Consequently, the bold Breton was not a whit astonished when "the Pulse of his Heart" commanded him to seek the Court of Arthur, and there prove her the most charming woman in existence, by means of those arguments so dear to all knights errant—manslaughter and housebreaking. That is to say, this very nice young man was to thrash all the Knights of the Round Table one after another, and then carry off the celebrated falcon belonging to the King, without asking any one's leave. The youth undertook the enterprise and met with the usual mishaps. He lost his way, was bothered, seduced, bewitched, and well cudgelled any number of times. At last he met with a benevolent fairy, who enabled him to complete his task with equal ease and honour. He carried off the falcon, and, along with it, a scroll which he found attached by a golden chain to its perch. Having reached home, he first arranged matters to their mutual satisfaction with his lady love, and then he employed a shaveling—always the proper word in a romantic legend—to read the scroll. No sooner was

* It will be found at the close of this volume.

the knight apprised of its contents than he despatched an army of messengers to summon all the Beauty and Chivalry of Armorica to discuss them. As in duty bound, Beauty and Chivalry hastened to obey the summons. They heard the wonderful story of the scroll, listened breathlessly to the reading of the thirty-one articles, and decreed unanimously that these articles were thenceforth, and for ever, to have the force of law among all high-born lovers. Then, they all took copies of the precious document, which they communicated to their neighbours on their return home. Thus the Code of Love became known to all Christian peoples. Its harmony with Christian faith, and, therefore, its suitability for directing Christian practice, may be surmised from the following few remarks of its most noted exponent, André, the chaplain: "I dare not decide that it is permitted us not to refuse the pleasures of the age. I fear that my doctrine might appear a little too contrary to the Commandments, and certainly it would not be prudent to believe that one ought to give way to mundane pleasures, rather than obey the Commandments." The reverend Père André was evidently one of those clever gentlemen who know how and when and where to "let I dare not, wait upon I would." This kind of comment was pretty certain to secure him from the censure of his superiors, without at all shaking his influence over his disciples.

Notwithstanding the fable told by André, the chaplain, we are far from believing that the Code of Love originated in Bretagne. The hero of Breton legend was often licentious, but never so on principle. He was neither exclusively earthy nor merely logical. His grossness was always considerably redeemed by his aspirations, and his reason tempered and softened by

his fancy. There is nothing of the Armoric character in the terse precision of the Code of Love; in its bold disregard of Christian teaching, or in its soulless materialism. From beginning to end, its precepts are the children of the soil which nourished epicurean infidelity and licentious heresy.

We commence our specimens of the decisions of the Courts of Love with one by the Countess of Champagne. To this princess a lady, and a gentleman who bore the title of count, presented the following petition, which seems to have been cast in the mould common to all such productions:—

It is proved by old experience that we should look for correct judgment in the neighbourhood where grows the Tree of Knowledge, and that in our necessity we should draw water rather from the brimming fountain than from the failing stream, since abundance of gifts cannot proceed from dearth of riches. Being one day under the shadow of a tree, discoursing of love and examining its commandments, a doubt was born between us, whether love could exist among the married or jealousy among lovers. We disputed on this doubt, and supported our respective opinions with arguments; but neither of us would give way. We agreed, therefore, after long contention, to submit it to your arbitration. And we now lay before you our opinions in writing, being firmly resolved to abide by your award, and perfectly confident that the truth will be elicited and speedily determined by Your Excellence.

To this petition the countess replied in the established form:—

Because we are bound to attend to all just petitions, and must not refuse our aid to those who are worthy to receive it—especially to those who err in the articles of love, and require to be directed aright therein—this that you have commended to me by your letter I shall study to bring immediately to a proper termination. Your letter states that between you was born this doubt, whether true love may exist between the married, or jealousy between lovers; and that, having debated the matter in vain among yourselves, you desire that I, who have your arguments before me, may deter-

mine which of you is in the right. Therefore, having examined the said arguments by the aid of sound science, we proceed hereby to enact that love cannot extend his laws over husband and wife, since the gifts of love are voluntary, and husband and wife are the servants of duty. Also between the married can there be, in our opinion, no jealousy, since between them there can be no love. For jealousy is the companion of love, as is set forth in the Code of Love, which declares that love cannot subsist without jealousy. This is our decision, formed with much deliberation and with the approval of many dames ; and we decree that it be held firm and inviolable.

To this sentence Raynourard, writing on the authority of André, the chaplain, affixes the date 1174. Crescembini, however, who uses another ancient manuscript, dates it ten years earlier, and with the Italian we are disposed to agree. The decree is quoted as a precedent by Queen Eleanor, which proves that it could not have been published in 1174, or at any subsequent period ; for in 1173 Queen Eleanor was imprisoned by her husband, nor did she regain her liberty for eleven years, that is until the age of sixty-one, when it would be rather too late for her to take further part in the doings of the Court of Love.

Queen Eleanor's citation of the Countess of Champagne was occasioned by a curious question. A cavalier, paying court to a dame already engaged, obtained her promise that, should she ever find herself at liberty, she would receive him as her lover. In process of time she married her gallant, whereupon the cavalier resumed his suit, conceiving with good reason, considering the manners of the period, that the lady was now at full liberty. She, however, could not be persuaded, against the evidence of her feelings, that the man of her choice had ceased to be her lover the moment he became her husband. The suitor being as firm on his side, the matter was referred to the queen. The award of the

latter was thoroughly, scientifically, and inexorably legal. "We dare not contradict the sentence of the Countess of Champagne, who has pronounced that love cannot exist between husband and wife. It is our decree, then, that the dame aforesaid keep faith with her cavalier." The poor lady, however, had a means of escape, as appears from a sentence given about this time by the Countess of Narbonne. Examining a case wherein a lady had dismissed her gallant on contracting marriage, the countess decided that "the supervention of the marital bond did not deprive the first lover of *his rights*, unless the lady announced that thenceforth she meant to abandon love." This meant the abandonment of society, for such a declaration was certain to cause her to be shunned by the gay ladies and gentlemen who then formed the vast majority of the fashionable world.

But though love could not exist between a married couple, it was still possible for a husband to become the accepted gallant of his wife. A case of the kind was actually submitted to the decision of the Countess of Narbonne, by a divorced husband who sought to be admitted as the cavalier servente of his former wife. He received the following satisfactory reply: "Between those who have been married, but who are afterwards separated, love is not to be reprehended; it is even respectable."

A case already cited shows that the Courts of Love could be transformed into instruments of oppression. It is a point of view from which we shall now take a further survey of them. As we have elsewhere explained, there were four degrees in love. The first was called "hesitating," on both sides; the second "praying," on the part of the gentleman; the third "listening," on the part

of the lady; and the fourth "druderie," or undisguised gallantry. When the lady consented to enter the last stage she granted the gentleman his first kiss, "on the, neck below the kerchief." The giving and receiving of this kiss between lovers, was considered equivalent to the marriage ceremony between the wedded. Thereafter, as it had been ruled by the Countess of Champagne, there could be no withdrawal from the engagement, without a cause whose sufficiency was to be determined by the Court of Love; and the said court, considering constancy to be the essence of high-toned gallantry, was not to be satisfied as to the validity of the cause without a good deal of trouble. In consequence of this rule it often happened that, when the lady was unwilling to give the kiss, the gentleman sought to obtain it by fraud or stealth, trusting that wit or fortune would enable him to turn his artifice into a legal title. It was in this view that Vidal stole a kiss from the Viscountess of Marseilles, and that Bertrand of Marseilles stole another from the Lady of Figuires, but in neither instance with any successful result. It seems that a promise of the kiss was considered binding when seriously given, a thing which rendered the law of love among the troubadours curiously similar to the law of marriage among the Scotch. A like use, too, appears to have been made of it by unprincipled people, among whom we feel bound to class William of Berguedam, a baron who dwelt on the borders of Catalonia, 1150-1215. Full of dash, restlessness, and ability, he was one who in a later age would assuredly have spent his days in astonishing Europe after the manner of the "admirable Crichton" and his compeers. As it was, he made the very best use of the opportunities accorded him by the ruder era in which his lot was cast. He patronised and rivalled the

wandering troubadours, he delighted in fray and foray, and he sighed and serenaded to any extent. Being one of those people who, however long they live, never reach years of discretion, we find him at the ripe age of sixty-five one of the most turbulent and intolerable, as well as one of the most battered, beaux of the period. On the verge of his career this choice spirit constituted himself the plaintiff in a suit for Breach of Promise, which was tried before one of the Courts of Love, the respondent being a very young lady. Put into plain English his plea would read somewhat thus: "I saw her the day of her birth; I have nursed her more times than I can count; I fell in love with her while she was yet in swaddling clothes; I cherished my passion in secret up to three months ago; then I disclosed my feelings and asked for a kiss, which she promised to grant the next time we met; she refuses to keep her word, and now I call upon this Honourable Court to do me right." The drift of the plaintiff was sufficiently obvious. Could he induce the court to decide in his favour, a thing by no means improbable, the young lady would be compelled to become his mistress, or submit to social excommunication, a punishment whose severity, he thought, must sooner or later reduce her to submission. For the defence it was admitted that the promise had been made; but this, it was urged, was purely in jest, and without the slightest idea that any demand would be made for its fulfilment. It was further pleaded that the damsel would never have given such a promise, even in jest, had she entertained the remotest suspicion of the serious consequences that might be evolved from her indiscretion. Finally, her advocates referred to the sixth article of the Code of Love—"*Masculus non solet, nisi in plena puberta, amare*"—urging that the word

*Masculus* covered both sexes, and that the damsel being undoubtedly under age, she could not be coerced into keeping a serious promise, had she made such a thing. William replied, asserting that the promise had been seriously and deliberately given, contending that the sixth article must be construed strictly according to the letter—a view of the case for which he adduced many authorities—and denying point blank that the lady was immature and therefore entitled to take refuge under the article cited, should the court rule, contrary to all sound reason, that the said article applied to both sexes. There could be no moral doubt as to which side the truth lay; but legal certainty and moral certainty are two very different things. Here the one thing legally certain was that a promise had been given, and a promise was not to be trifled with. In those days hardly anything else was regarded as binding. Men who hesitated at no other perfidy took pride in religiously observing their word; and it would have been a serious thing to have furnished the unscrupulous with such a precedent, as the approval of Breach of Promise by a tribunal which was emphatically one of honour. At the same time the court had no wish to perpetrate a glaring wrong by pedantic adherence to the letter of the law. Under these circumstances, the president—who in this instance was a gentleman—and his council managed to patch up a sentence which, at the same time, manifested their reverence for that sacred thing, a promise, and completely satisfied the requirements of justice. William was commanded to take his kiss, because the lady had promised it; and then to give it back again because he had no right to it. The young lady experienced no further annoyance. Shortly after his non-suit her ancient admirer managed

to thrust his head in the way of a mortal stroke, to the great relief of society.

The foregoing samples of their working give us a view of the darker side of the Courts of Love; let us look for a moment at the brighter points. There was a lady whose lover had been long absent on an expedition beyond the seas. Despairing of his return, she sought a new gallant, and found one to her liking. Here, however, the secretary of the absent gentleman intervened like a queen's proctor, and summoned the lady to answer to the charge of Infidelity before the court of the Countess of Champagne. The accused defended herself skilfully. Quoting the seventh article of the code, which states that two years of widowhood must be observed for the death of a lover, she pleaded that if a widowed lover might contract a new engagement at the end of the two years specified, it was but reasonable that she should be allowed to replace an absent lover who for a term far longer than two years had left her unconsoled by letter or message, especially when the means of communication might have been easily found, had he thought it right to seek them, To this the Countess sternly replied :—

"A lady has no right to renounce her lover, under the pretext of long absence, unless she knows, by infallible proofs, that he has violated his faith and failed in his duty. The absence of a lover through necessity and for an honourable purpose, furnished no sufficient excuse. Nothing should be more gratifying to a lady than to hear from distant lands, that her lover is winning glory and acquiring consideration in the assemblies of the great. The circumstance that he sends neither letter nor message may be attributed to extreme prudence. He may be reluctant to entrust his secret to a stranger. And he may fear that a letter would disclose

the mysteries of his love, either through the faithlessness of the bearer, or through his death during the voyage."

The Courts of Love interposed to punish infidelity as well as to check it. A lover already engaged abandoned his mistress to sue to another. After a few days' dalliance with the latter, he quarrelled with her and sought to renew his engagement with the first. Then both dames united to prosecute him in the court of the Countess of Flanders. "Let the wretch," decreed the Countess, "lose both sweethearts, and thenceforth let no honourable woman listen to him. For he is possessed by an ungovernable will, which is the mortal enemy of true love."

Concerning the last-mentioned judgment, it may be remarked, that, though the laws of the Courts of Love were unchangeable as those of the Medes and Persians, it was not impossible to evade them. So at least experienced one of the several troubadours, known as Richard of Barbesieux. The gentleman we allude to, a man of fortune and ability, who was as handsome in person as he was elegant in manners, became the acknowledged gallant of the wife of the Lord of Touai. For awhile his passion burnt with the fiercest flame; he was always at the beck of the lady he loved, and extolling her in all kinds of verse. Richard, however, was cursed with an "ungovernable will," and showed it in due season. One fine day he abandoned his first love for a second; and a few days afterwards he forsook the second love to resume his attentions to the first. In short he played precisely the part of the criminal dealt with by the Countess of Flanders; and although the fact is not expressly stated, there can be no doubt that he was tried, condemned, and punished ac-

cording to that precedent by the local Court of Love. The excommunicated troubadour retired to a hermitage in a neighbouring wood, where he spent his time, partly in composing melancholy roundelays, and partly in pointing bitter serventes against the members of the court that had condemned him. The latter was by no means the lighter portion of his task, for sooth to say these ladies were not immaculate. Accepting a current piece of scandal concerning the president, he said in one of these invectives: "There are dames, who, when punished by heaven with barrenness, do not shame to produce supposititious offsprings, in order to secure the dowry which is the right of mothers." Having dealt thus with his leading foe, he denounced her coadjutors as "spending their lives in corrupting innocence; in justifying what was wrong; in depreciating what was right; in forcing people to refuse what they loved and accept what they hated; and in boasting of and laughing over the triumphs of their perverse ingenuity." Elegy and servente produced great effect. The former procured him general sympathy, and the latter rendered his judges exceedingly uncomfortable. At the end of a few months they found that his virulence was becoming quite intolerable; and in order to find an antidote, they agreed to revise his case. Then they discovered that the troubadour had been tried and cast on a false issue. What they had mistaken for Infidelity, a crime that could not be forgiven, turned out to be mere Flirtation, which, according to the statutes in that case made and provided, was on the whole a thing to be commended. So at least had decided Queen Eleanor, and she was one of the infallible authorities of the Court of Love. "Such is the nature of the passion," ruled the queen, "that lovers often feign other engage-

ments to assure themselves beyond a doubt of the constancy and fidelity of the objects of their attachment. It is, therefore, a glaring offence against the laws of love for a lady to make the flirtation of her lover with another a pretext for dismissing him, unless there be evidence to show that he has failed in his duty and broken his plighted faith." The excommunication of Richard of Barbesieux was therefore rescinded, and Madame de Touai was recommended to restore him to favour. One would have thought that the troubadour ought to have been satisfied with this; but a fit of petulence had taken possession of him, and he refused to quit his hermitage. In a few days, however, he thought better of the matter, and, resuming all the graces of dress and demeanour that had formerly characterised him, he hastened to his mistress, to find that she had taken to her breast the fit of sullenness that he had just discarded. He pleaded, and his friends pleaded for him, but for a long time in vain. At length the lady relented to this extent:—she agreed to pardon him whenever a hundred dames and as many cavaliers, all true lovers, should come together in a row and entreat her on their bended knees to do so. Richard bestirred himself to gather the requisite company, nor did he find it a difficult task. Every lady in the neighbourhood was only too anxious to make one of such a delightful party, and, of course, every lady had a true lover at command. We may remark that a variation of this, as well as of many another troubadour's story, will be found in the Cento Antiche Novelle.

Such cases as that of Richard of Barbesieux were far from uncommon. The most faithful of knights would be tempted, at times, into flirtation, and the mildest of mistresses would give way occasionally to fits of jealous

anger, much to the content of the members of the Courts of Love, who were thus provided with abundant matter for delicious discussion, as was remarked by an ill-natured troubadour, who was also one of the last of the tribe, "with ample means of wreaking their vengeance upon scornful lovers and successful rivals, and with endless opportunities for gratifying their natural inclination for prying into and gossiping of the affairs of their neighbours. Nor," adds the said splenetic bard, "do I think that the Courts of Love would have flourished to such an extent, had they not pandered thus to the foibles of the sex."

Treachery in love was mercilessly punished. A cavalier loving a dame, and having few opportunities of meeting her, they agreed to communicate by means of his secretary. The latter took advantage of his position to sue for himself, and met with full success. When the master discovered the perfidy, he denounced the pair to the Countess of Champagne. The latter, considering the case of unusual importance, collected no less than sixty ladies to discuss it, and this was their unanimous decision: "Let the traitors, who are in every way so worthy of each other, reap the benefit of their crime. But, henceforth and for ever, let them be banished from society. Let neither ever be invited to the assemblies of the ladies, or to the sports of cavaliers; because he has broken the faith of a gentleman, and because she has violated the principles of female modesty, in stooping to a messenger." We may observe that the last line of the sentence was dictated by the eleventh article of the code, which declared it "shameful to love where it would have been a shame to wed."

An offence not uncommon in our own days was thus castigated by the ladies of Provence:—"Let the culprit

who reveals the secrets, with which he has been entrusted by a lady, be henceforth and for ever deprived of all hope of love. Let him be contemned by both sexes; and should any lady dare to break this law, let her incur the enmity of every honourable woman." It is stated that the ladies of the South were compelled to frame this statute by the prevalence of the offence, and to render it thus severe in the hope of restraining it.

Those who were given to vaunting of favours unreceived were not spared by the Courts of Love, as a troubadour, whom Nostradamus terms Guilhem de Bargemon, found to his cost. He was in the service of Raymond Berenger, the last of the old Counts of Toulouse, by whom he was highly prized. One day the gentlemen of the Court happened to indulge in a pastime, very common among Gascons and other Southern men in past days, and not yet quite forgotten by them. It was just that amusement which Shakspeare, who is always true to nature—except only when he meddles with geography—attributes to the French cavaliers the night before Agincourt—vaunting. When all the gentlemen had exhausted themselves in the effort to outdo one another in the matter of throwing the hatchet, Guilhem of Bargemon, who had kept silence until then, came out with his boast. "Gentlemen," said he, "permit me to state that there is not one here present whom I have not dishonoured." "And me too?" questioned the Count. "As for you, my lord," replied Guilhem, "I neither include you in the number of those who have suffered as I state, nor exclude you therefrom." Everybody laughed, for the speaker was reputed to surpass even Peter Vidal himself in the way of lying. The matter would have passed off without further notice, but for the unfortunate fact that Guilhem had a faculty

for turning things to ridicule, and that he delighted to exercise this faculty on the ladies, whose hatred he had thus secured. They were soon apprised of his latest folly, and hastened to take advantage of it. Constituting themselves into a Court of Love, they proceeded to try the boaster "who had outraged them so impudently." Of course he was found guilty. Their sentence was that he should be expelled the Court of Provence. Many of the ladies would have added a whipping, but the proposition was negatived on account of the youth of the offender. Count Raymond was then summoned to execute the sentence, and he had no choice but to obey, though sorely against his will. Another version of this story is given in the Cento Antiche Novelle, in which the hero, there said to have been William of Bergedam, is represented as about to undergo the whipping at the hands of all the ladies, and as escaping therefrom by a piece of coarse wit. This last version is also told of John de Meung, one of the composers of the celebrated romance of the Rose, as well as of a German minnesinger.

The Courts of Love punished some offences peculiar to vulgar minds with great rigour. The Countess of Champagne, when regulating the presents that might pass between lovers, decreed that they should be limited to rings, gloves, ribbons, and trifles that could not possibly cause the recipient to incur the imputation of being mercenary. And Queen Eleanor ruled, that she who received presents under the false pretence of responding to the affection of the giver, should be accounted infamous. It is a fact that a lady of Avignon convicted of breaking these statutes was expelled with ignominy from the town. This could be no trifling punishment under any circumstances, but, as inflicted in

the olden time, it was terribly severe. Sometimes the offenders were grotesquely dressed and mounted on asses, with their faces to the tails; they were thus paraded through the principal streets, and passed through the gate, never to re-enter, amid the jeers of the mob. In this way the citizens of Milan treated the mother of the Emperor Frederick, whose vengence originated the most insulting gesture known to Italians, and an insolent phrase—"A fig for you"—known everywhere. Sometimes the culprit was led the same round on foot, and then kicked through the gate by the public executioner. In aggravated cases the subject was stripped of every article of clothing, previous to the promenade. The probabilities are that the dame of Avignon underwent the penalty in the last and worst form.

Perhaps the strangest case ever submitted to the wisdom of the pretty sages presiding over the Courts of Love, was one preferred by the citizens of Toulouse against a lady who dwelt in that city. She was known as "la Belle Paule," and her beauty is described as prodigious. Her admiring fellow-citizens haunted her in crowds: wherever she appeared nothing else was noticed. The draper exhibited his wares, the preacher exerted his eloquence, the tilters employed their skill, but all in vain. Everything else was forgotten in the universal comtemplation of la Belle Paule and her "prodigious beauty." Thoroughly disgusted with this oppressive homage, which allowed her not a moment's peace, she made up her mind to appear no more in public, and confined herself strictly to her chamber. The consequences were disastrous in the extreme. The male citizens in a mass began to pine, growing meagre, wan, and woeful as so many ghosts, until the whole place wore a plague-smitten appearance. It is affirmed "sur

l'honneur" that several eminently enthusiastic individuals, spent days together round the house in the hope of catching a glimpse of her at the windows, and that—being disappointed, they absolutely died of "les angoisses de leurs regret." In this state of things the governing body was compelled to take prompt measures, and resorted to the nearest Court of Love. This tribunal fully appreciated the emergency, and decreed forthwith that la Belle Paule was to exhbit herself at her window at least once a week, and for not less than half an hour at a time, in order that her neighours might have an opportunity of "refreshing themselves" by contemplating her prodigious beauty. The story is of the class which the Germans term "Kraewinkler." But its very exaggeration shows the appreciation of beauty among the troubadours, and the powers exercised by the Courts of Love.

It would appear from certain manuscripts preserved in the archives of the towns wherein were held the most celebrated of these courts, that they took cognizance of certain crimes of a serious cast, and constituted themselves the protectors and avengers of defenceless females. The celebrated Folquet of Marsailles was actually tried in one for an attempt at seduction, and, being convicted, was thrust with ignominy from the city whose name he bears; though another was better entitled to the preference, as Petrarch has not forgotten to remark—

> Folchetto ch' a Marsiglia il nome ha dato
> Et à Genova tolto. *Trionfo d'Amore.*

There might be some doubt of Folquet's guilt, since the charge was preferred by a slighted mistress, Adalais, wife of Beraldo, Lord of Marsailles, a lady powerful

within the Court, and still more powerful beyond its precincts. But there can be no doubt concerning the trial and its results, or, therefore, of the sway arrogated by these tribunals. Perhaps this particular trial did something towards driving the powerful-minded Folquet into the Church, wherein he became the deadliest foe of Southern princes and Southern institutions.

We have told in another place how a Court of Love caused Fabro of Uzes to be whipped for singing, as his own, songs to which he had no right. This fact proves that the authority of these courts extended further, in matters literary, than to the criticism of language, and sentiment and to the decision of the relative merits of rival bards. They were, indeed, much more frequently called upon to exercise judgment as critics than to decree the punishment to be inflicted upon plagiarists. But the discussion of these critical prerogatives we leave for another chapter.

In conclusion, we wish it to be understood that our remarks apply exclusively to the Courts of Love, as they existed during the Crusades. Making due allowance for human nature, "the gallant" was one of the inevitable consequences of the Holy Wars. With them he rose and flourished, and with them he vanished—that is as a national institution. When he disappeared the Courts of Love had no further serious business to transact, and lost, indeed, their principal *raison d'être.* They followed him to the grave, but not immediately, for institutions never die with the circumstances that created and sustained them in vigour. Their extinction was preceded by that period of decrepitude and dotage in which they merited the censure, which Hallam applied rather too severely to their whole existence, when he stigmatised them as "fantastical solemnities where ridiculous questions of gallantry were debated." May

we add that the great compiler fully accounts for the sweeping nature of his censure when he writes, directly afterwards: "I have never had the patience to look at the older writers who have treated this tiresome subject." Not consulting "the older writers," it was very natural that he should term the subject "tiresome." Whether our readers will agree with him or not, is another thing.

# TROUBADOUR'S LOVE IN THEORY.

THE theory of love propounded by the Troubadours was full of fantastic conceits, which their contemporaries doubtless considered "sweetly pretty things." According to this theory, the lover always dwelt at the sign of the Fair Passion, in the Street of Sacrifice, and in the Parish of Sincerity; while his mistress, the daughter of Cruelty and Tyranny, had her residence at the sign of the Stony Heart, in the Street of Rigour, and in the Parish of Severity. Love was conceived of the imagination, born in the heart, and nursed by the will. It lived on gaiety, drew its strength from the persecutions of the envious, and attained maturity when the falsehoods of the latter were exposed. Then, of course, the lovers became happy, and devoted all their time to singing. The Troubadours had a God of Love who differed in many respects from the classic divinity. Vidal, who in this particular may be considered to speak for the whole fraternity, describes him as a handsome young man, with a swarthy complexion, an aquiline nose, and teeth that shone like "burnished silver"—features which prove to our satisfaction, that their possessor was introduced to the Provencals by their neighbours, the Spanish Moors. This dusky potentate bestrode a palfrey of which one side was black and the other white, one shoulder brown and another grey, one ear yellow and

the other dappled, and the mane and head red—a variety of colouring that had a meaning, which, however, we shall not attempt to penetrate. The rider of this variegated palfrey bore the titles of Prince of Constancy, Lieutenant-General of Fidelity, Marquis of Amiability, &c. Beside him, on a jennet caparisoned in white, ambled a light-haired beauty whose name was Mercy. She was hardly less renowned than Love himself, being constantly invoked in the lyrics of the Langue d'Oc and in the early songs of Italy. Behind Dame Mercy trots her lady of honour, Chastity, whose profusion of hair, falling loose to her saddle, conceals her face and covers her arms to the tips of her fingers—a picture which might have suggested, or been suggested, by that of Godiva, though we incline to think the former. Knowing how much the men of the East, North, and West borrowed from the Troubadours, it seems to us quite possible that there was a Provencal legend of Chastity, now lost, of which the legend of Godiva is a monkish adaptation. Beside dame Chastity rode the squire, Loyalty, bearing in one hand a slender wand, in the other an ivory bow, and at his side three arrows, one of which was pointed with gold, another with silver, and the third with lead. Repeated allusions to these arrows occur in mediæval song. Guido Cavalcaniti, the friend of the greatest Italian poet, devotes to them a sonnet whose concluding lines say that they

> fan tre ferute :
> La prima dà piacere, e desconforta,
> E la seconda desìa la virtute
> Della gran gioia, che la terza porta.

The passion, Love, was esteemed one of the attributes of aristocracy. Peter of Auvergne says that the knight without love is a husk without a grain. Bertrand von

Born places want of love in the same class as ignorance of the mysteries of the chase and cowardice in war—that is, among eminently vulgar characteristics. The same opinion is expressed by Dante when he makes Francesca of Rimini say—

Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende.

Three lines lower the same poet alludes to the indivisibility of Love and Mercy—

Amor, ch' a null' amato amar perdona ;

a line which, as Cary has not forgotten to notice, has been imitated by Boccaccio, Pulci, and other successors of the mighty Florentine. Mercy, indeed, was merely the feminine of Love, and, though extending her power over both sexes, was supposed to be especially the quality of the dames. It was an article of faith among the Troubadours that she who remained untouched by the suit of a faithful lover, deserved the severest punishment. A great authority among them, the Countess Die, pronounces cruelty to be a sin equally grievous in the eyes of God and of man. And many of them anticipate Boccaccio and other novelists, in devising suitable punishments for the offence, that given in the "Decameron," harsh and repulsive as it may appear to us, being quite in harmony with the ideas of the age for which it was written. Vidal closes his description of Love and Mercy by making them sing these lines :—

Let all those dull and soulless wights
  Who will not love the lasses,
Their coursers yield to worthier knights,
  And nought bestride but asses ;
And let those dames by whom, for gain,
  A show of love is given,
Each, laden with a sack of grain
  O'er the highways be driven

Vidal, it seems, would have punished the knight who did not love at all, precisely as the German legislators of the same era were accustomed to punish the knight who loved too well. When the latter dared to appear at a tournament, after a *mésalliance*, he was deprived of his charger, and compelled to ride the stockade that surrounded the course until the close of the sports. It is not unlikely that Vidal intended to sneer at this. The troubadours, especially those of low birth, were the declared foes of all those items in the feudal system which interfered with their amorous or ambitious views, and Vidal was vain, ambitious, and low born. As to the punishment which he devised for the mercenary beauties, it was in conformity with repeated decisions of the Courts of Love, which denounced the offence as infamous. In those days an attempt was generally made to give every punishment an appearance of poetical justice. We read of knights of that era who were found guilty of dishonourable acts being condemned to carry an animal, or the harness of a beast of burden, as a signal species of ignominy. We may conclude, therefore, that the bearing of a sack of grain had a significance which, though plain enough in the twelfth century, can no longer be detected.

According to theory there were four stages in love. The first was called Hesitating, and lasted while the lady was making up her mind as to whether she would allow the gentleman to prefer his suit or not. During this period, whose length depended on the character of the arbitress, the gentleman was not allowed to say a single word of love; but he was expected to manifest "the passion that consumed him" by sighs, gestures, and acts as expressive. The last meant that he was to haunt the lady's steps by day and to hover round her

dwelling by night. On the whole, what with his night-walking and gibbering—for he was in duty bound to grieve, groan, and turn up his eyes in all companies—a lover in this stage, were he to make his appearance among us, would be set down as a remarkably likely candidate for Bedlam. The second stage was termed Praying, and in this the gentleman was permitted to put his wishes into words and lay them, with due humility, at the feet of his mistress. In the third, which was called Hearing, she began to give some evidence of softening by assigning tasks to the youth, which were quite as well adapted to prove the hardness of his pate as the intensity of his affection. The final stage bore the expressive title Druerie: it began with a parody of the ceremonies observed at the investiture of a vassal by his feudal superior. The gentleman knelt before his lady-love, placed his hands between hers, and acknowledged himself "her man" in set form. She accepted his homage in equally set form, and in token thereof gave him a kiss, whose yearly repetition was to be the highest reward of his fealty — according to theory.

The preliminary stages might, and often did, last for years, and as often had no end. Gaucelm Faydet is said to have served Mary of Ventadour for seven years, and in vain; and Peter Vidal served Adalais of Baux for even a longer period, with the like result. Instances, oo, are recorded wherein life was spent in probation. There was always a limited number of high-toned, romantic spirits who rather liked this sort of thing. It was completely to the taste of Guillem of Agoult, who sings somewhat thus:—

True love a thought can never breed
  Virtue would blush to name;
True love ne'er meditates a deed
  Would bring its object shame;

With licence it has no accord;
  It dreams not to deceive;
Its service is its sole reward;
  'Twould rather die than grieve.

In the same mood Guillem of Cabestaing requests permission to kiss his lady's glove, and presumes to no higher favour, and Aymerie of Beauvoir actually kisses a glove that his mistress has dropped—an incident which he commemorates in song:—

Upon my breast that little glove
  With overwhelming force descended,
  And crushed the barrier that defended
My heart 'gainst the besieger Love.

In another lyric this troubadour admits that his mistress neither values, nor is likely to value, his affection. He determines, however, to dangle on, comforting himself the while with a hope which he knows to be vain, and which he thus expresses:—"At least, beautiful lady, whatever torment I endure, it will still be glorious to hope; for a rich and noble hope is better than a worthless gift." This hoping against hope is an idea often sung by the troubadours, and by none more ingeniously than by Bertrand d'Alamon:—

If you would know the reason why
  But half a song I bring,
I have—alas, I must reply—
  But half a theme to sing!
'Tis I alone that feel the spell;
  'Tis I alone that burn:
The lady that I love so well
  My love will not return.

I'll take the "No" she deigns to give,
Since she withholds the "Yes;"
Better with her in hope to live
Than elsewhere to possess!
Since with my fate I cannot cope,
Shall this my solace prove—
To dream that she, as whispers hope,
May one day learn to love.

No doubt there was a good deal of affectation in this kind of thing. Many a poet pretended to cherish a hopeless passion merely as an excuse for the exercise of his ability in the production of quaint and novel conceits. Quaint and conceited enough these people managed to make themselves, though they do not always appear quite so novel. It is not uncommon to find a dozen of them harping on precisely the same string, and with but the smallest amount of variation. To our thinking, Petrarch's passion was of this kind—an affair altogether of the head. The great sonnet-builder was as inveterate in his imitation of the fashions—literary and amorous—of the Troubadours as he was unscrupulous in appropriating their ideas—we might add, and their very words. The Troubadours who, like Petrarch, preferred to sing a hopeless passion, usually selected a dame whose rank and repute placed her altogether beyond their reach—a duchess, or a queen, who was not at all likely to countenance such advances. Folquet de Lunel went even farther. Not finding an earthly mistress to his liking, he actually sought for one in heaven, making the Virgin the subject of his amatory lays, and singing her without stint under the name of his "Gerson." It is a term which commentators are at a loss to explain. We, however, suspect that Folquet of Lunel was just such a jovial spirit as the English Bishop of the last century, who

was much given to remarking that *orthodoxy* was *his doxy*, and we think the word Gerson neither more nor less than a form of one which is often used by the older French writers, and which is the rather more familiar than respectful feminine of the noun *garçon*.

For the most part the unreality of such passions was well understood. There were, however, instances in which, by dint of singing the charms of a celebrated dame, the singer managed to work himself into a real affection. So seems to have done Geoffrey Rudel, who bore the title of Prince of Blaye, though the said principality could not have been any mighty thing, if Nostradamus be correct in his account of the prince. According to the erudite astrologer of the sixteenth century, Geoffrey passed his earlier years in the household of the Lord of Agoult—a great Provençal baron—as a stipendiary poet, which was the lowest grade but one in which a troubadour could appear. Cœur de Leon, who then bore the title of Count of Poitou, happening to pay a visit to the Lord of Agoult, and expressing himself much pleased with the abilities of Rudel, the generous host immediately made his guest a present of the singer. The proceeding seems somewhat odd; still nothing was more common in the good old times than such a transfer. Even so late as the sixteenth century our ancestors considered the gift of a poet, or his equivalent, a fool, as a graceful proof of respect and affection. Rudel remained in the service of Richard, whom he found a generous patron, and from whom it is probable that he received his "principality." At this period the pilgrims who returned from Palestine were loud in the praises of the beauty, wit, and learning of the Countess of Tripoly—a fact which goes to prove two things: the first being that these gentry were

thorough-going scandal-mongers; and the second that, in the good old times, a tinge of blue was considered to enhance the attractions of a lady. There can be no doubt, indeed, concerning the latter; no troubadour ever omitted to credit his mistress with learning, when there was any possibility of persuading the world that she deserved it. Nor was this as seldom as might be thought. Heloise was not at all singular among mediæval maidens, either in her desire for learning; or in the method she took to gratify it by employing a private tutor; or, we are sorry to add, in ultimately learning to prefer the tutor to his lessons. To return to Rudel: "he became beyond measure the lover" of this beauty that he had never seen, sang her praises in innumerable songs, and, finally, determined to make his way to Tripoly in the garb of a pilgrim. Previous to his departure he composed the following canzon:—

I love—a stranger to mine eyes,
  One to mine ears unknown;
Who cannot listen to my sighs,
  Nor breathe to me her own;
Yet do I feel, and would I swear,
That she is lovely, past compare.

Beside my couch each night she seems
  A blessed watch to keep;
Then I admire her in my dreams,
  And love her in my sleep.
The morning comes and she takes flight;
A world divides her from my sight.

That world I'll cross to reach her gate,
  And kneel her chair beside.
The journey must be fortunate
  Since Love will be my guide.
And she shall know that, for her sake,
The pilgrim's staff and gown I take.

Thrice happy if within her hall
  She yield me shelter then!
Yea, I'd content me as a thrall
  Among the Saracen—
To breathe the air that round her spreads,
And tread the blessed ground she treads!

It is resolved; I cross the tide,
  I leave my native place;
Oh God, transport me to her side,
  And let me see her face!
Grant me but life that I may tell
My tale to her I love so well!

There shall the minstrels sing my song,
  And some its sense explain;*
A tale of love so strange and strong
  She cannot hear in vain!
Ah, should her heart prove obdurate,
The fairies must have warped my fate!

Sickening on the voyage, Rudel had a narrow escape from being flung into the sea by the sailors, who at one period thought him dead, or in a state so hopeless that there was no chance of his recovery. Thus were pilgrims treated in the olden time by those whose calling it was to "go down to the sea in ships." He escaped the catastrophe; but when the ship reached Tripoly he lay like one about to breathe his last. The Countess was apprised of his arrival and condition. And she, who was no stranger to his mania, which, indeed, his songs had rendered notorious from Gibraltar to Lebanon, hastened to the vessel. Making her way to where Rudel lay unconscious, she leant over him and, taking him by the hand, welcomed him to Palestine. The Countess had come unannounced; but the grace and sweetness of her address, coupled with the unerring

* Our readers will notice that Rudel was insane only as a lover. Few poets would so frankly admit that their verses required explanation.

instinct of love, declared to the poet who it was. He raised himself joyously, as if he meant to spring from the grasp of death which was evidently tightening round him. Collecting his fleeting senses, he thanked her in glowing terms for her visit, which he declared had given him new life. "Oh, most illustrious and virtuous Princess," he continued, "I will not submit to death now that ——" "I have seen you," he would have added, had not the King of Terrors interposed and hushed his voice for ever. The Countess was greatly affected. Nostradamus states that she caused his remains to be placed "in a rich and an honourable tomb of porphery, on which were inscribed some verses in the Arabic tongue," and that, so greatly did she take the death of Rudel to heart, that she was never more seen to smile. Other authorities assert that she immediately became a nun. Nostradamus, however, uses "the rich and honourable tomb of porphery on which were inscribed some verses"—though not always in the Arabic tongue—suspiciously often: and the story of a bereaved lover taking the vows is as common at the close of a mediæval legend, as is the verse about the growth of sweet briars and roses on the graves of unfortunate sweethearts, and their intertwining, when they reach a certain height, at the end of an old English ballad. There are things, too, in the story of Rudel which can hardly be reconciled with the known facts of history. And, finally, the very same story is told of another person, Andrea of France, who would seem to be identical with the compiler of the code of love. That there was such a person as Rudel, that he loved a Countess of Tripoly in the strange way related, and that he undertook a pilgrimage in search of her, may be true. Doings at least as wild are told of other

troubadours. But the pretty conclusion we consider a pure fabrication, though not without a purpose. The Provençal singers set themselves from the beginning to exalt themselves and their craft, and to inculcate what they considered a proper respect for both. To their patrons they were never weary of preaching generosity and courtesy; by which they meant that it was imperative, on all who wished to be considered perfect ladies and gentlemen, to lavish goods and graces without limit on the sons of song.

The troubadours were invariably the most respectful and timid of lovers at the outset. They shrank from the expression of their sentiments, being dazzled, bewildered, and awed by the beauty of their dames, until the lips, so fluent in all other circumstances, completely forgot their office. Thus writes Arnaud Daniel:—

To my mistress I tremble to say
The love pent my bosom within:
Though so eloquent when she's away,
I forget with her how to begin.

Similarly sings Guy of Uzes:—

To see her face, a smile to gain,
Or glance that strikes me through—
In turn each pretext do I feign,
Save love, the one that's true.

Into my heart, if love were weak,
But little fear would come;
They feel not who unfaltering speak:
The deepest love is dumb.

Of her to others 'tis my pride
To breathe the willing song;
But love o'erwhelms me by her side,
And checks my trembling tongue.

And so also sings Aymerie of Beauvoir:—

How many times over, in secret, your lover
His passion has made up his mind to explain?
But, when you're before him, a feeling comes o'er him,
Half awe and half fear that quite muddles his brain,
And his fine resolution to speak renders vain.

Such sentiments, however, were not peculiar to the troubadours. Moore has penned a few lines so curiously like some of those we have given that we think it right to quote them, the more especially as they appear to be somewhat less known than many other productions of the Irish minstrel:—

I would tell her I love her, did I know but the way;
Could my lips but discover what a lover should say.
Though I swear to adore her every morning I rise,
Yet, when once I'm before her, all my eloquence flies.
Oh, ye gods, did ye ever such a simpleton know?
I'm in love and yet never have the heart to say so!

Having plucked up a spirit one moonshiny night—
Then thought I, "I'll defer it till to-morrow's daylight."
But, alas! the pale moonbeam could not frighten me more,
For I found by the noonbeam I was dumb as before!
Oh, ye gods, did ye ever such a simpleton know?
I'm in love and yet never have the heart to say so!

Strange to say, this extreme reverence was not generally approved of by the Provençal dames. We find them repeatedly expressing their disgust thereat, and, while remonstrating with their lovers on account of this embarrassing bashfulness, recommending them to adopt a bolder bearing, much after the fashion of a Countess of Provence whose identity we have no wish to determine:—

Since in your face your love I trace
I would not have you shy.
Ah, were you but to sue for grace
I hardly could deny!

But pray be quick and get it o'er!
'Tis folly thus to sigh.
To win a smile and—something more
Perhaps you've but to try.

Come, summon up your spirits, dear,
And trip the preface through!
Your timid air, your groundless fear,
Distresses me, as you.

Your courage wake! The ice *do* break!
You'll find it very thin.
You know that etiquette forbids
A lady to begin.

This being the state of affairs on one side, it is unnecessary to add that eventually the poets contrived to find their tongues. The first use they made of these members was to indulge in extravagant protestations, and in the expression of sentiments too like idolatry. Thus sang Arnaud Daniel:—

My lady is the fairest she
That dwells beneath the skies.
There's not a joy exists for me
Like looking in her eyes.

Her to propitiate lamps shall flame
And priests shall masses say:
Next to my God, unto my dame
I adoration pay.

It may be observed that profanities like those alluded to in the fifth and sixth lines, with the view of inclining one who was loved to respond to affection, were commonly practised, not only in the middle ages, but at a much later date. We select a few instances in illustration from the multitudes given by ecclesiastical writers. Thomas Bossius relates that, in 1273, a woman made an attempt to regain the lost affection of her husband by a perfectly indescribable use of the host. Thiers,

a writer of the last century, and than whom there was none more learned in the history of superstition, states that he once saw at Chartres a capuchin, who not only advised a pair of lovers to communicate together with the view of securing mutual fidelity, but who himself actually administered the sacrament to them to this end, breaking the wafer into two pieces, of which he gave one to the female and the other to the male. Perhaps the grossest instance of such practices was discovered at Rouen, in 1647. The thing had been going on for years, the scene being the convent of St. Louis de Louviers, and the actors the whole of the nuns and their successive confessors, the last of whom was burnt for his part in the horrible farce. The whole story is told in a book drawn up under the dictation of one of the nuns by Desmarets, a respectable clergyman of Rouen. It was published in 1652, under the name of the "Histoire de Madeleine Bavent."

The extravagancies of the troubadours who had begun to "lisp" their love was seldom confined to words or superstitious observances. There was, indeed, quite a rivalry among them as to which should devise the silliest adventure, and execute it in the silliest manner. One of the strangest of their methods of manifesting devotion grew into a mania which reappeared periodically down to the end of the fourteenth century. Those who submitted to its influence were termed Gallois; and as there is mention made of Galloises, it is clear that the maniacs were not all males. These people made it their glory to become the martyrs of Love, and this was the way in which they secured their desire: They staggered along under a heap of thick woollen garments at midsummer, and thence to the close of autumn. On the first of November they threw off all their superfluous

robes, retaining barely what was usual at the season. These they diminished, bit by bit, as the inclemency of the weather increased, until, by midwinter, there was nothing but a single linen garment left to shelter them from the cold. In this guise they delighted to expose themselves to every wind that blew, traversing the frozen plains and climbing the snow-covered hills in all directions. "These practices and these amourettes," says an ancient writer, "lasted a great while—so long, indeed, that the greater number of the Gallois died, or were disabled by hardship. Every morning the peasants might have been seen carrying some of them from where they had found them, lying in the fields. Some were stark and stiff, and others had to be rubbed and chafed before the fire, while their teeth were forced asunder with knives. The ladies were delighted with this display, and failed not to sneer and gibe at those who went about fully dressed. It is a thing beyond all doubt that the Gallois and Galloises who perished were the martyrs of Love."

It was customary, and indeed necessary, for any gentleman who undertook an adventure at the command of his mistress, to obtain the approbation of his feudal superior. That granted, he was free, for the period of his task, from all obligations save those imposed by love. To show this, he always assumed a visible token of his condition, after the manner of Sir Walter Manrey and his companions, who carried a patch over one eye in one of the French campaigns of Edward III., until the performance of some gallant feat enabled them to cast it aside. The manner set down in the romance of Petit Jean de Saintre was, however, much more common. There it is told how the Lord of Loiseleuch caused a ring of gold to be fastened round his left arm above the

elbow, and a second ring of the same metal above the left knee, the two rings being connected by a chain of gold. It is stated that any gentleman who met a cavalier thus distinguished was bound, as a matter of courtesy, to dismount and salute the token on his knees.

When the troubadour became the accepted servant, friend, or cavalier of a lady, love might be developed by the pair in many ways, one form only being strictly prohibited, and hardly ever attempted, that which led to marriage. That form which is called Platonic had its advocates. These, however, formed but an infinitesimal section; and though they claimed that theirs was the species which originally obtained, it was always to lament the departure of the golden age of morality and the prevalence of quite other principles and practice. "Never," says William of Agoult, "did I form a wish obnoxious to the purity of any lady; I could glean no gratification from aught likely to wound her delicacy. No, a true lover am I; and the true lover prefers the happiness of his mistress, a thousand times, to his own. In former days it was the glory of gentlemen thus to love, and necessarily, for their mistresses would have disdained any other service." Then this high-toned troubadour indulges in a Jerimiade to the effect that in his age virtue had fallen altogether into decay, and passion become material. His praises of ancient excellence and his denunciations of current depravity are repeated, with small variation, by many others, of whom we may mention Guy of Uzes and Ugo Brunet. With respect to the eulogies which these poets lavish on the good old times, we have to observe that they are hardly so well founded as the complaints which follow.

These "good old times" are like the rainbow—myths which shine very prettily in a troubled atmosphere, but which always evade pursuit. As often as they are chased through history, they flit before the student from one age to another, until they vanish in the obscurity of tradition.

The species of love that really prevailed among the troubadours is fairly illustrated in a canzon by Rambaud of Vaquieras. In this piece the poet urges his suit to a Genoese dame, He uses all the sophistries common among the refined gallants of Provence on these occasions; and he places in the mouth of the lady precisely such homely morality and vulgarly virtuous argument, as might be expected from the unfashionable wife of a mere Genoese trader. As we have elsewhere shown, it was a leading article of the Code of Love that tender feelings could not exist between husband and wife. The principle was confirmed by numerous decisions of the Courts of Love, and universally recognized in aristocratic circles, where conjugal affection was a thing to be derided and contemned—the mark, indeed, of a supremely low-bred creature. In his tenzon, Rambaud satirises all the women of Genoa by making their representative exclaim, "Be off with you, scurvy Provençal! I have a husband much handsomer than thou." He completes his ridicule of the class to which she belonged, by causing her to declare that she was unacquainted with what good Society considered so essential—the jargon of Love; and that she entertained some respect for the good opinion of her spouse, coupled with a lively apprehension of his wrath in case of infidelity; both these being sentiments which the Provençal dame would have scorned to entertain. As a pendant to our sketch

of the tenzon of Rambaud of Vaquieras, we subjoin these lines by Guy of Uzes :—

I value whatever can strengthen esteem,
And all that disturbs it despise.
On pleasing intent still our mistresses seem,
While a wife just the other way tries.
Then the lover is honoured who praises his dame ;
Who dotes on a wife meets with nothing but shame."

It must be admitted that there existed a levity of manners among the troubadours hardly to be paralleled in any other age or country. From end to end of the Langue d'Oc shameless intrigue was the rule. In their actions and in their writings the gentlemen—nearly all amateur poets—were so many Sedleys and Rochesters. And in both respects they were fully equalled by the ladies. Perdigon speaks as the representative of society in the following lines addressed to a mistress :—

In Love, I pray, bear you in mind,
I hate all this chivalrous pother ;
Whenever one dame proves unkind
I'm off to make love to another.

For I'm not the fellow to pine
Long years for an obdurate gipsy ;
Nor be always foregoing my wine,
When just in the mood to get tipsy.

There's many a prettier girl ;
But that you've no reason for rueing.
For I'm neither prince, duke, nor earl,
And can't be fastidious in wooing.

You have in sufficiency for me
A store of good looks, youth, and spirit ;
And your very devoted I'll be—
So long as you happen to merit.

Gaucelm Faudet struck the same chords, but with even

a bolder hand, in his address to the high-born and beautiful Mary of Ventadour:—

Your rigour, dame, has driven me mad;
But if you further strain
This heart with waiting, then, by God!
You'll quickly drive me sane.

If you relent, myself am bent
To yield you love most fervent.
But if you don't, why then I won't,
And you will lose a servant.

Yes, you may sniff and take a tiff,
And show yourself a curst thing;
I'll go to find a dame more kind,
And sing you with my worst string.

The last line involved a threat which was often used by the troubadours, and always with great effect. Their satire was as terrible to the ladies of Provence as was that of Archilocus to the Greeks of his era. We cannot, indeed, give any instance wherein the subject was driven to suicide, but we shall shortly have occasion to mention a remarkable case wherein bitter serventes all but ended thus. If, however, Provençal satire failed to direct the hand of the self-murderer, hardly a day passed in which it did not produce very serious results. Many fled from it to the shelter of the convent, and at least as many were intimidated by it into actions for which they had no liking. And though Mary of Ventadour escaped being victimised by Faudet, it was only by the employment of a *ruse* which rendered her tormentor a laughing-stock, and thus paralyzed his satire so far as she was concerned.

The cynicism expressed by Perdigon and Faudet is surpassed by that vented by Rambaud of Orange—a man of the highest rank—in a few lines, wherein he

sums up some of the leading maxims in love current among his contemporaries :—

My boy, if you wish to make constant your Venus,
Attend to the plan I disclose :—
Her first naughty word you must with a menace;
Her next—drop your fist on her nose !*
When she's bad, be you worse !
When she scolds, do you curse !
When she scratches, just treat her to blows !

Defame and lampoon her, be rude and uncivil ;
Thus you'll vanquish the haughtiest dame.
Be proud and presumptuous, deceive like the devil ;
And aught that you wish you may claim.
All the beautiful slight ;
To the plain be polite ;
That's the way the false huzzies to tame !

In conformity with these principles, the chivalrous Von Born actually maligned, in the grossest way, his beautiful mistress Maenz, with no other purpose than simply to deter other gallants from approaching her. We may remark that this was the system propounded in the last century by the infamous de Sades. It was practised, however, with remarkable success, a hundred years earlier, by the celebrated Duke of Lauzan and his nephew, the lover of the beautiful daughter of the Regent Orleans. It does not astonish us to find that Rambaud of Orange was sighed for and sung by half the rhyming dames of Provence, of whom one at least was quite as cynical as himself. The Countess Die, whom Raynouard terms the Sappho of the Troubadours, and whose lyrics he shows himself inclined to prefer to those of the poetess of Lesbos, addressed a poem to Rambaud, in which this sentence occurs :—"Let him come in the evening to take the place of my husband,

* Literally thus in the original.

and my caresses shall be the gage of his fidelity." Identical terms were used by another high-born dame, the Viscountess Albisso, to the Count de la March, and by the haughty sister of the Dauphin of Auvergne to Uc Marshal, one of her knightly admirers. The ladies, however, who descended to the use of these unpleasant phrases, could love such gross libertines as Rambaud of Orange with much tenderness, and lament their infidelities in touching songs. Thus Azalais of Porcairagues bewailed Rambaud's desertion of her :—

Hail to the winter's weeping clouds!
  Hail to its wailing winds!
The dreariness my heart that shrouds
  The scene congenial finds.

My Prince doth to another sue,
  And woeful is my fate;
How wretched are those ladies who
  Attach them to the great!

Their love becomes a jest, a stain,
  A mock, a thing to hate.
"Nought," says the proverb, "do they gain
  Who listen to the great."

Had I obeyed the warning tone,
  And loved an humbler wight,
I had not thus lamented lone
  This dismal winter night.

Azalais, however, did not long lament in loneliness. Soon afterwards we find her announcing a new *liason* in the following joyous canticle, of which the last two lines contain an idea, a little varied, already expressed by Perdigon :—

The frankest lover living!
  Oh, heart! rejoice to tell—
To him thy fondness giving,
  Thou hast bestowed it well!

I swear it by my beauty !—
For ever true to prove—
While he conforms to duty,
And the laws of faithful love !

This was the usual course of Provençal gallantry. The attachment was vivid, sensual, and short; and just sufficient interval was left for the production of a few doleful ditties before a new connection was entered on. There were exceptions, of course; the lady or gentleman was not always so fickle or so easily comforted; and the final parting did not invariably take place without some attempt at reconciliation. With this view the Lady of Castelozza addressed this remonstrance to a lover whose name has not been preserved :—

How closely to you would I cling;
How quickly your falsehood forget;
And praises alone of you sing,
Could you be sincere even yet !

To coquetry did I resort
They say 'twould your constancy win;
But that were just censure to court,
And give you excuse for your sin.

From a heart that refuses to melt
Those who bid me my feelings conceal,
A passion like mine never felt;
A passion like mine cannot feel.

To censure my passionate sighs,
I'm sure that there would be but few,
If you they could see with mine eyes,
Or dwell on your lips as I do.

Never out of my thoughts is that night
When you said you'd be mine ne'er to part.
On that promise I dwell with delight;
'Tis the dream—the fond dream of my heart !

No envoy I send, but declare
In person, I hope not in vain,
No shelter have I from despair
If you will persist in disdain.

As you wish to be honoured below;
As you hope to find favour above;
On your suppliant mercy bestow,
Nor let her die martyred of Love!

Poetical remonstrance with fickle lovers was not the rule among the Provençal ladies, for the simple reason that when matters amatorial came to the worst, and it became a question of jilting or being jilted, the fair sex preferred to deal the first stroke, and usually contrived to do so. This leads us to the consideration of another peculiarity of Troubadours' Love. It was an age in which Revenge was esteemed a virtue, and no offence was more certain to call down vengeance on the head of the offender than one against affection. Our sketch of Raimond of Miravals contains some specimens of such vindictive action on the part of gentlemen; but the legends that remain of the females of the same period furnish many more striking. Of these the story of Guilhem of St. Legier is a fair sample. He was a wealthy baron of Viana, famed for his amiable qualities and knightly accomplishments. The chosen gallant of the Viscountess Polonhac, he had a brother-in arms, Uc Marshal, who was in the confidence of himself and his lady-love. The greatest familiarity existed between the three. According to a custom of the age, they assumed one name in common, and were known far and wide as the three Bertrands. "For a long time there was much joy and comfort between all three," says the old story-teller; "but the end proved a thing full of sorrow for Guilhem. The other two Bertrands did him a great wrong and a

vile felony, as you shall hear if you give me your attention. There came to Viana a beautiful lady, the Countess of Castel Rousillon, whom everybody sang. Guilhem berhymed her among the rest, and as he sang well, and was a 'very gentle perfect knight,' the Countess found much pleasure in his songs. Now Uc had long wished to supplant his brother-in-arms in the affections of the Viscountess, so he contrived to have it told to the latter by other lips, that Guilhem was guilty of infidelity. At the same time Uc himself pretended to know nothing of the scandal. The Viscountess believed as she had been informed, that the Knight of St. Legier and the Countess were lovers even to the last degree, and she was very wroth at the wrong that she conceived had been done her, and determined to inflict due vengence on the main offender. Sending for Uc, she addressed him bluntly, saying, 'En (sir) Uc, I desire to have you for my cavalier. I am well acquainted with your character, and no gentleman suits me better. Above all, I know of none whom Guilhem would more dislike to see preferred by myself. I mean to avenge myself of him by your means. To that end I command that you accompany me on a pilgrimage that I am about to make to Viana. We will go to St. Legier, to Guilhem's house'—'jazer en sa cambra, et el sac lieg vuelh que vas jaguotz ab me.' Uc pretended to be astonished at the proposal, and made a feeble show of resistance, remonstrating that the lady really was going somewhat too far, and that her commands were not altogether just. She, however, quickly overruled his objections, and he agreed to aid her in her vengeance. Arraying herself 'gent and fine,' she took the road with Uc, her damsels, and her squires, to make her pilgrimage to the shrine of the good St. Anthony of

Viana. Reaching St. Legier in due time, she dismounted, and Guilhem, not being at home, she did just as she pleased at his house, executing her vengeance according to her plan. The thing was soon noised abroad; for, indeed, it would not have been vengeance at all wanting notoriety. Guilhem was soon apprised thereof, and he was greatly grieved. But he did his best to conceal his feelings—especially from the Viscountess—and thenceforth he devoted himself to the Lady of Castel Rousillon." It would appear that the villain of the story did not escape with impunity. Nostradamus relates that the lady, in no long time, discovered his treachery, and that she sent him to collect her rents on certain estates, where he was slain by the tenantry under circumstances that were never explained, and that certainly need no explanation to show that the Viscountess was an unscrupulous termagant. It may be added that the course adopted by the Viscountess as a means of inflicting vengeance, was not unusual with the dames of the period, who seemed to think that it afforded them the best means of exhibiting supreme contempt for a disagreeable wooer. Just in the same way acted the lady of Albisso, when pestered by the unwelcome attentions of Gaucelm Faudet, using the house of the latter as the scene of an assignation with a more favoured lover, the Count de la March.

It was an axiom of the troubadours that love was never so sweet as after a right good quarrel. They were, therefore, in the habit of getting up "scenes" pretty frequently, with the sole purpose of enjoying what Gavaudan terms "the exquisite delight of reunion." The most approved method of getting up a quarrel—one, by the way, which was solemnly approved of by several decisions of the Courts of Love—was by

engaging in a hearty flirtation. The experiment was dangerous withal. Not a few of those who attempted its practice failed grievously. The parties against whom it was played off were often roused beyond the pitch designed, and took revenge after the manner of the Viscountess Polonhac. Even when the worst did not occur, the reconciliation was not always to be attained without excruciatingly anxious delays and certain painful sacrifices. One rash gentleman had to propitiate his mistress by playing the hermit in the depths of a forest for many months. Another was only restored to favour when he succeeded in inducing a hundred ladies and as many gallants—all being devoted lovers—to kneel before his mistress and intercede for him. More curious was the penalty imposed in the following instance. Piere of Barjeac, and his friend Guillems, of Balaone, were inseparable. Both were gentlemen of Montpellier, and "good and dextrous troubadours." The one loved Guillena, wife of the lord of Jauviac, and the other loved Iverna, the wife of a little valvassour, who held of the same lord. "These gentlemen loved their ladies exceedingly, serving them and singing of them; and their ladies loved them as much in return, as it was possible to love." Piere, quarrelling unintentionally with his mistress, Iverna, Guillems interposed and effected a reconciliation between them. Thereafter, hearing Piere boast that the sweets of love were infinitely sweeter after a quarrel than before it, Guillems was tempted to try, in his own person, if this were indeed the truth. The first step was to get up a quarrel. When next he met Guillena he was about as insolent as he could be, in consistence with his knightly character. The lady was very forbearing, and attempted to win him into a good temper, but in vain; he quitted her,

apparently in a towering rage. She sent messengers after him, whom Guillems refused to hear, and treated with much unnecessary rudeness. The lady then sought an interview, "and, throwing herself on her knees before him, besought him to pardon her, if she had ever done him any wrong." Guillems proving inflexible, the lady lost all patience, and returned home indignant. Guillems saw that he had succeeded in getting up the desired quarrel; but he was hardly satisfied with his success. Fearing that he might have carried the thing a little too far, he spent no very pleasant night. Next morning he hastened to the castle of Jauviac, expecting to achieve the reconciliation with no very great difficulty, and feeling himself just in the mood to appreciate its lauded sweets. He met with a reception differing somewhat from that for which he looked. The lady refused to see him, which was bad, and had him expelled with ignominy, which was worse, seeing that the said ignominy consisted of any quantity of hooting, half-a-dozen stout cudgels, and several big dogs—being, in fact, little, if at all, more tolerable than "tarring and feathering," even when the luxury of "riding a rail" happens to be superadded. Guillems returned to Balaone with what may be termed inexpressible suffering; for not only did his heart and his shoulders ache, but his nether garments were sadly rent. Safe at home, he changed his damaged robes, applied balsam to his outward bruises, and put on all the airs and graces of an utterly disconsolate lover. His neighbours were soon acquainted with his predicament, and thronged in to give him consolation. Among the rest came the Baron of Anduse, who, if not a troubadour himself, was at least the spouse of one celebrated poetess and the father of another, and could, therefore, appreciate the feelings of

his friend. This gentleman undertook to effect the desired reconciliation, and after a wearisome negociation, in which many hitches and not a few threatening crises took place, succeeded. The lady consented to receive Guillems on the old footing, on condition that he made her a new song, deploring his faults, and extolling her charms, and that with this song, he presented her with the nail of the middle finger of his right hand. The nail she insisted on having, because "Guillems was a most brave strummer of cat-gut, and made much use of this particular nail in his strumming." Guillems was delighted to comply. He made the song in a twinkling, and, hurrying off to the nearest surgeon, bore the removal of the nail without making one wry face. The lady of Jauviac received both presents graciously—so graciously, indeed, that, in his turn, Guillems was enabled to proclaim the surpassing sweets of reconciliation in love.

The Code of Love declared that affection was not to be placed where it would be a shame to wed. This meant that gallant connections were only to be formed between persons of equal rank. It would appear that the rule was enforced to a certain extent. Arnaud de Marveil, a troubadour of low birth, laments that he dares not reveal his love for the Countess of Beziers, even by his looks. Peyre Rogier, who sighed for Ermengard of Narbonne, and Folquet of Marseilles, who dangled in the train of the wife of one of the Viscounts of that city, use similar expressions. Many a lady, too, addressed a presumptous cavalier as Beatrice of Montferrat addressed Rambaud of Vaquieras, ordering him to convey his love to "dames who were made for him." Not all the troubadours, nor even the majority of them, submitted to this restriction. Many of them did their

utmost to reason, or ridicule it away. Bertrand of Marseilles says that love is not swayed by riches or honours, but rather by the qualities of the mind and body; Guy of Cavaillon considers that deeds equalise all ranks; and Guy of Uzes boldly maintains that the lady who refuses to look upon a devoted lover as her equal, is guilty of a crime. Nor were these assertions of the dignity of intellect without much success, as we intend to show when we come to discuss that portion of our subject which relates to the Cavaliér Serventé.

In spite of its gallant customs, Provence was not exempt from marital jealousy. Thus we find that excellent singer, Bernard of Ventadour, flying for his life from the wrath of the Viscount Ebles of Ventadour, whose dame had bestowed a kiss on the troubadour. And thus we find William of Cabestang falling under the vengeful sword of the Lord of Castel Rousillon, the story of whose vengeance adds such a striking chapter to the history of the Southern bards. It was necessary then for gallants to resort to artifice on occasion, and some very clever ones have been recorded. Among these, one adopted at the outset of their loves by a pair whose parting we have already related, deserves some notice. It seems that at some time or other, the Viscountess Polonhac had promised her husband never to accept a gallant, except at his own request. The Viscountess, like all the high-born ladies and gentlemen of the period, prided herself on the strictest adherence to her word, and, like most of the ladies and gentlemen of the period, she cared very little about breaking it in spirit, so long as she could keep it to the letter. For awhile herself and her chosen lover, Guillems of St. Legier, were greatly distressed by the promise, and much puzzled as to how it was to be set aside in an honourable

way. After thinking for a long time, Guillems hit on a notable plan. He told the Viscount that there was a certain lady who had promised never to love without the consent of her husband—a thing which proves that such promises must have been pretty common, otherwise the Lord of Polonhac must have had his suspicions excited by such a beginning. Guillems went on to say that the lady he spoke of loved a worthy knight, but that she shrank from breaking her promise, and in consequence fell seriously ill, and that her husband, discovering the cause of her illness, and being quite a model husband, according to Provençal ideas, released her from her promise, and allowed her to have lovers to her heart's content. Guillems added that he had put the story into a song, of which he gave a copy to the Viscount. The latter was amused by the story, and liked the verses. He recited both to his wife, who, being in Guillem's confidence, affected to be equally amused and pleased, especially with the stanza which contained the husband's licence to love. This stanza she requested her husband to recite again. He did so in his best manner, and the dame, applying the words to herself—by one of those mental processes which won the castigation of Pascal, when recommended by a certain order of casuists—considered herself released from her obligation, and acted accordingly.

Marital jealousy being not unknown in the land of song, and elopements being among the results of this passion, such things happened occasionally among the troubadours. A noted instance, that of Peyre de Maenzac, will be found in our sketch of the Dauphin of Avergne. Still more remarkable was the one in which Sordel, one of the heroes of Dante, took a principal part. At one period Sordel was the Cavaliér Servénte of Cunizza, the

sister of the monster Eccelino of Romagna. The connection was broken off after the marriage of the lady to the Marquis St. Boniface. But Eccelino and his brother becoming the foes of this noble, they actually employed the former lover of their sister to steal her away from her husband! It was a good example of the utter unscruplousness of Italian policy in that age. Sordel found little difficulty in persuading the lady to fly with him. Cunizza afterwards became the heroine of a variety of light adventures, much resembling those which Boccaccio attributes to the daughter of a certain king. But the strangest thing connected with her story is the fact that Dante, who condemns the infinitely nobler Francesca de Remini to eternal punishment, actually gives the worthless Cunizza a conspicuous position in Paradise! Nor is the singularity at all lessened by the explanation which he puts into her mouth, to the effect that she was born under the planet Venus, and therefore the blameless victim of its influence.

> Cunizza fui chiamata, e qui refulgo
> Perchè mi vinse il lume d' esta stella.
> Ma lietamente a me medesìma indulgo
> La cagion di mia sorte, e non mi noja
> Che forse parria forte a lvostro vulgo.—*Paradiso* ix. 32-6.

Such opinions, though not universal, were widely entertained in that age. The troubadour, Nat de Mons, has left a tenzon in which he summarises the arguments for and against the doctrines of astrology, without attempting to decide between them; and Alfonso of Castile, to whom he submitted the piece, hesitates equally to pronounce an opinion. Others, however, were hardly so cautious. The doctrine that sinners are not responsible for their sins is far too pleasant not to gain numerous

disciples, whether it be propounded under the name of phrenology or astrology.

One result of gallantry among the Provençals was an attention to the person which, in too many instances, became extravagant. To say nothing of excess in ornament, the ladies of the South are said to have indulged in such devices as painting! Thus sings Ogier :—

> I cannot bear those ancient graces
> Who cheat us with their made up faces.
> The lovely white and red they show
> Are borrowed from the medico.

And again :—

> That creature so splendid is but an old jade ;
> Of ointment and padding her beauty is made ;
> Unpainted if you had the hap to behold her,
> You'd find her all wrinkles from forehead to shoulder
>
> What a shame for a woman who has lost all her grace
> To waste thus her time in bedaubing her face !
> To neglect her poor soul I am sure is not right of her,
> For a body that's going to corruption in spite of her.

The Monk of Montaudin, who is equally severe, goes more into detail. He says that the ladies lay on the paint so thick as to eclipse the images suspended in the chapels ; that the older ones paint the wrinkles under their eyes ; that they mix mercury with other drugs ; that they use a wash of which mare's milk and ground-beans form the chief ingredients ; that they employ saffron so lavishly as a cosmetic, as to quadruple the price thereof ; and that there are more than three hundred different washes and ointments employed by the sex.

It would have been as well had the dames confined their chemical studies to the composition of cosmetics

Never, however, was there a brisker demand for those ugly things, love lotions, which were, as usual, little better than poisons. Among the victims of such trash were several of the troubadours. One of the highest promise, Luc de Grimaldi, was attached to a young lady of the great house of Villeneuve, and from her he received a potion that deprived him of reason. Nor was this the worst. In one of his paroxysms the poor man slew himself. Nostradamus writes that the damsel was repeatedly impelled to the verge of suicide, by the reprobation—most of it in verse—which her conduct drew down. But, unfortunately for the character of the age, his remarks go to show that, in this instance, public abuse was directed at the deed, not as a thing essentially wicked in itself, but because it had deprived society of a man that could ill be spared. A brother poet, Rostang Berenguer, was more fortunate in similar circumstances. "He was enamoured of a Provençal dame, whose name and family are unknown, and who was somewhat stricken in years. She was the most expert in mischief of all the women of her time. She knew all the simples that were to be gathered on the Col d'Amie and among the other mountains of Provence; she was skilful in the composition of aphrodisiacs, and learned in the days most favourable for their administration. To the poet this woman gave a beverage which I will not term erotic, but rather mortal. In consequence of this draught he lost his senses, and assuredly would have died had he not been succoured by a pitying damsel, the daughter of a Genoese gentleman of the house of Cibo, who dwelt at Marseilles, and to whom the poet had been introduced by means of a canzon which he had written in her praise. Through a powerful antidote which she gave him to drink, the damsel restored him

to sense and health. In return, the grateful poet not only celebrated his preserver in many songs, but, abandoning the hag, sought to devote himself to her exclusively. She, however, being as virtuous as beautiful, repelled his attentions, and eventually induced him to discontinue them by means of a poem which she wrote—for she, too, was a troubadour." It is not improbable that the mediæval Mrs. Turner introduced in the foregoing story, was as skilful as her English successor in producing aids to beauty; and it is quite possible that, like many another of her species, she was fully capable of preparing and administering a fatal draught on request. That the damsel Cibo, who was so virtuous and beautiful, should possess similar knowledge, shows the startling prevalence of such studies in the good old times.

There were not wanting writers to denounce the whole vicious system of gallantry propounded by the troubadours, authorised by the Courts of Love, and maintained by Fashion. Giraud Borneil shows what he thought of the current vice when, alluding to the divorce of Louis VII., he says—"It is better for a king to forfeit one-half of his dominions than to retain a wife of infamous repute." Ricard of Barbesieux declares that the ladies of fashion spent their time in corrupting one another, and in ruining all connected with them; and that, when they had effected all the mischief within their power, they sat down to justify their depravity, and to make merry over its results. Guy of Uzes says—"Love is utterly degenerate; women engage therein as a play, take the first comers to their hearts, and change them as they change their cloathes." William Adhemar laments that they prefer fools to men of merit, and disagreeable gallants to amiable husbands; that they

despise the liberality of the former, and, while ruining their fortune, abandon themselves to suitors equally worthless, in mind, body, and estate. And Peyre d'Auvergne boldly denounces these gallant connections as so many adulteries, from whence spring a generation destitute of honour, courage, or merit of any kind, and which usurps estates, titles, and honours, to which it has no right.

*Note.*—On page 138, it is stated that Guillems of Balaone made much use of one of his nails in playing on the harp. Such a use of the nail, it would seem, was considered in the olden time, essential to skilful play. Thus, in one of the oldest of English romances, King Aylmar directs his steward to teach the fugitive young prince Horne to touch the harp

"With his nayles sharpe."

# THE CAVALIÉR SERVÉNTE;

## OR, LOVE IN PRACTICE.

AMONG the troubadours there could be no recognised and sustained gallantry between a pair when the lady was much the inferior in point of birth. The Cavaliérs Servéntes, then, were of two classes: they were either the social equals of their ladies, or selected from a condition much beneath them. In the first instance there were certain duties imposed on the gentleman, and certain rights accorded to him. He could not refuse to perform the one, nor his lady to grant the other, without incurring disgrace. The rights we shall allow to disclose themselves as we proceed. The duties were multifarious. The cavalier was to escort his mistress abroad and to wait on her at home. He was to show her particular attention in society, to secure her a duly honoured place in all companies, and to eat off the same plate at meals. "There were eight hundred cavaliers seated at table," says an old romance, "and there was not one among them that had not a dame or a damsel at his trencher." In another romance—that of "Lancelot of the Lake"—a lady plagued with a jealous husband is made to lament that, for many a day, no gentleman has eaten off her plate. In church the cavalier was to take care that no lady of inferior

rank was censed before his mistress. This was one of his most onerous tasks, since there was nothing more disputed in the olden time than the honour of premier censing. Even so late as the seventeenth century, it was not uncommon for rivals on this item to come to blows, even in the church. In earlier times such disputes led to many deadly feuds, and in later days to numerous duels and an infinity of endless law-suits. In addition to the duties already mentioned, the cavalier was expected to keep his mistress well supplied with flowers according to the season, to make her frequent gifts of elegant trifles, and to give feasts in her honour according to his means. He was also bound, from time to time, to show that his attachment was undiminished, by undertaking hairbrained adventures in her honour, according to the law thus laid down by Giraud Calanson :—

> The envoys of the heart should be
> The noble deeds of chivalry :—
> A daring charge, an escalade,
> A knight or banner captive made;
> A pass against a host maintained,
> A name through trials borne unstained—
> Thus love most eloquently speaks ;
> This is the homage maiden seeks.

Old story abounds with such adventures, which the knight did not always undertake alone. There were instances wherein the dame accompanied him, in order to be the witness of his prowess, and wherein, we are bound to add, she was quite prepared for any event, and as ready to reward victory in the person of a stranger as in that of her "friend." Thus Ariosto, who borrowed so much from the Provençals, and who makes Doralice

> Dio ringratìo con mani al ciel supine,

when she fancies that her lover, Mandricardo, is victorious in his duel with Ruggiero, represents this same Doralice as only restrained by shame from swelling the crowd of the Paladin's admirers, when he proves the victor. "The Southern Scott" adds, still adhering strictly to nature as manifested among the troubadours, that Doralice

> Per non si veder priva d'amore,
> Havria potuto in Ruggier porre il core.

Many a Doralice may be traced through the byways of mediæval history.

One of the most usual tasks imposed on the cavaliér servénte was to keep a narrow pass, for one month, against all knightly comers; that is, to allow none such to thread the defile without an encounter, lance to lance. In 1449 a renowned warrior, the Bastard of Burgundy, actually accomplished such a task, obstructing for a month the road between Calais and St. Omer, at a spot called La Belle Jardin. During the whole of the time he was accompanied by a lady of the highest rank, whose real title was shrouded under one adopted for the occasion, "The Fair Pilgrim." We are not aware that la Belle Jardin was one of the usual scenes of such adventures. There were passes, however, south of the Loire to which knights habitually resorted for a similar purpose. Conspicuous among these passes were the entrance to the Valley Chivalrous, in Dauphiné, and the Strait of Razili, near Chinon, in Poitou, each of which bore the name of the Dragon's Mouth. Never, from the beginning of spring to the close of autumn, were these passes to be found destitute of defenders, each of whom retained his post for a month. A romance describes two such champions resting on their arms at such a spot. Their banner floated from the branches of a

neighbouring oak, to the trunk of which was fastened a sheet of parchment, inscribed with the conditions of the emprise. Among these conditions, which may be accepted as common in these cases, it was laid down that neither dame nor damsel should be allowed to pass, unless attended by a cavalier willing to break two lances in her honour, or unless she left a pledge which her cavalier was to redeem within a certain time. There was an alternative which we shall not transcribe. Should the champion of the dames fail to keep his seat in the encounter, he was allowed to redeem his arms and his horse, the usual prizes of the fray, by pledging his honour to perform some ridiculous penance. It should be explained that the defenders of such a pass were bound to signify their arrival by sending a herald, accompanied by a trumpet, through the neighbourhood, and that merchants, peasants, pilgrims, and other such wayfarers were not to be molested. Thus the highborn ladies who risked themselves on such a path were considered to do so deliberately, and fully prepared for aught that might happen.

The cavaliér servénte was bound to glorify his mistress with his pen as well as with his sword. If incapable of using the former, he either took a low-class troubadour into his pay, or he formed with one of knightly rank just such a brotherhood in-arms as the Marquis of Monferrat formed with Rambaud of Vaquieras. It was, indeed, indispensable for a man of rank to sing himself, or to find a friend who could sing for him. The first wish of a Provençal beauty was to be eulogised in song. And well it might be, seeing that the influence of the lyre was co-extensive with Christianity, and that to be the subject of an approved canzon was to become an object of curiosity, of desire, and of envy

at every court in Europe. Thus the wife of an obscure chatelain—of a man little known in his own restricted neighbourhood, and not known at all a league beyond it—might, and often did, obtain as much celebrity, and consequently as much homage, as the wife of the mightiest prince. Such a lady became a centre of attraction to all that was brilliant among the knightly and noble, and kings, princes, and counts made pilgrimages to her residence as to a popular shrine. Thus the King of Aragon was drawn to Lombez, and the Count of Foix to Cabaretz, by the praises which the ladies of these places received from Vidal and Raymond de Miravals.

The cavaliér servénte never used the real name of his mistress in his songs. When the lady happened to be attached to a court, it was usual for the troubadour to address all his amorous ditties to the presiding princess, like Uc of St. Cyr, who sang the beautiful Claramond under the name of her mistress, the Countess of Provence. The princess usually accepted these songs as the very highest species of compliment, though perfectly aware that somebody else was intended, and that she herself played some such part between the poet and his mistress, as the tulchan bishops of the Scotland of another and a former period, used to play between the tithes of a diocese and the great men who really enjoyed these good things—that is, as a conduit for transmitting the songs to the real object without directing suspicion to the latter. The custom had a comic side; the poet might give blue eyes and golden locks to a dark-browed sovereign, and might describe her as rejoicing in youth, beauty, and genial temperament, when she was really and notoriously the reverse. But however the singer pretended to describe the princess, the description was always accepted as if it were strictly accurate, and

rewarded, precisely as our ancestors of the eighteenth century used to reward dedications. When the lady he loved happened to reside on her own domain, then the troubadour invented a pet name for her. Thus Rambaud of Vaquieras termed Beatrice of Montferrat "My charming Cavalier," Ricard of Barbesieux sang his mistress under the name of "My Soul and My Body," and Arnaud Daniel berhymed Madame de Boville as "Cibernia." It was not unusual, especially when the lady was a poetess, for the *nom d'amor* to be used in common. There were even instances in which it was applied not only to the principal in an intrigue, but to all the confidants thereof. Thus Guillems of St. Legier, his mistress, Azalais de Claustral, and his friend, who was also her friend, Uc Marshal, were each termed "my Bertrand." This custom was adopted in obedience to the canon which laid down secrecy as essential to gallantry. But as, generally speaking, secrecy was the one thing that gallants did not desire, the custom was merely a piece of fashionable affectation—the thinnest, indeed, of disguises; for nobody who took the smallest interest in the songs could well remain in ignorance of the persons and incidents to which they referred.

If it was the first wish of a Provençal beauty to become renowned in song, it was assuredly the second wish of her heart to hear her rivals libelled through the same medium. Perhaps, of the two, the cavaliér serventé found more occupation in traducing the ladies of the vicinity, at the command of his charmer, than in publishing high-flown panegyrics on the charmer herself. Nor did he do the former without some personal risk. It was not unusual in the good old times for the retort to a sharp satire to take the forms of cudgelling, tongue slitting, and at times of assassination. For these reasons,

then—to praise herself, to repel the slanders levelled at her, and to slander others—the gallant dame desired above all things, that her cavalier should wield, in person if possible, a trenchant pen. Indeed the service of the wielder of such a pen was a subject of dispute among the beauties of a province. None could count on his fidelity for any length; for no contrivance or temptation was left untried to win him from his happy possessor for the time being. Perhaps this, quite as much as his natural inclination that way, tended to render Rambaud of Orange the rake *par excellence* of his day.

Rambaud was nearly allied to William of the Short Nose, who was created King of Arles by the Emperor Frederick. He was the lord of many castles, a dashing soldier, a man of fashion, and a poet. His poetry, indeed, was more remarkable for vigour and daring, than for grace of idea or smoothness of versification. But, being ready witted, full of animal spirits, a devoted friend, a bitter foe, and a reckless, rollicking, jovial prince, he was at once the dread and the delight of the ladies, of whom nearly all the more noted of the period loved and lamented him in turn. After innumerable *bonnes fortunes*, some of which we have noticed elsewhere, and each of which was illustrated by its cynical canzons, Rambaud attached himself with unusual steadiness to the Lady of Castelverde, whom he immortalised under the odd name of "My Funny Thing." From her, however, he was compelled to separate by evil reports —which means that the flirtation between the pair had become altogether too frank and "al fresco" for that not very sensitive generation to tolerate longer. Rambaud then made up his mind to visit the Countess of Urgel, a Catalan dame whom he had never seen, but whom he was led to like, as Geoffrey Rudel had been led to like

the Countess of Tripoly, on common report." The said report credited her with all the requisites of a troubadour's mistress—that is, not only with beauty, wit, and learning, but with wealth and generosity. Nor was Rambaud the less inclined to turn his steps towards Urgel, because it was notorious that the Countess had fallen in love with him through reading one of his songs, and that she had said, in confidence, to one of her waiting-women, who had communicated the remark, in confidence, to all the world, that if Rambaud would only pay her a visit, there was absolutely nothing in her power to bestow for which he might not hope. On his way to Catalonia Rambaud fell ill. Being thus unable to continue his journey, he made up a parcel of original lyrics, which he transmitted to the Countess by means of a wandering minstrel who bore the euphonious name of the Nightingale. Doubtless Rambaud intended to follow, but, in the course of his convalescence, he formed a connection with a woman of the lowest rank, from which, adds one of his biographers, he drew neither honour nor profit—the first, because such an amour was accounted disgraceful in a man of his rank; and the second, because this plebeian woman could not bestow upon him any of those substantial tokens of love which troubadours were in the habit of receiving, and indeed of exacting, from their highborn mistresses. Shortly afterwards we find the gay Prince of Orange at the court of the last of the Raymonds of Provence. Here he addressed a canzon to the Princess Margaret, afterwards the Queen of St. Louis, and was immediately exiled to the Island of Hieres by Raymond's prime minister, "Romeo" Villeneuve, a man concerning whom is related one of the most singular stories of the middle ages. It was a very unusual reward for such a compli-

ment; so, at least, it was thought by the Princess who interceded with success to procure the recall of the poet. He died shortly afterwards, having worn out his life, like so many similar characters, while, so far as years went, hardly yet in his prime.

By far a better specimen of the cavaliér servénte than Rambaud of Orange was Raymond Jordan, Viscount of St. Antoine en Quercy. He is described as handsome in person, courteous in manners, dextrous in arms, and magnificent in habits. It is further stated that "he was a good poet in all the vulgar dialects." These were five: the Langue d'Oil, the Langue d'Oc, the Gascon, the Tuscan, and the Catalan, as appears from a canzon by Rambaud of Vaquieras, in which all five are employed. Raymond Jordan was especially noted for his mastery of the Provençal, in which, says Nostradamus, and not without a good deal of truth, men of all nations then took pleasure in writing. This estimable and accomplished knight loved, and was beloved, by a beautiful and an amiable lady, Madame Mabile Rais, wife of the Viscount of Albi. She, however, shrank from showing her preference, being apprehensive of exciting the jealousy of her husband. So Raymond Jordan, growing weary of sueing in vain, and not being disposed to content him with the high platonics advocated by some of his tribe, went off to the wars in desperate mood. He took care that his intention of flinging away his life in battle should be conveyed to Mabile. She, therefore, when news came that he was slain, gave full credence thereto. It is quite probable that the Viscount had the report spread with the view of working on the affection of his mistress. But, if this were the fact, he overshot the mark, for she was so much affected by the tidings as to die of grief. When Raymond returned from the

campaign, and was apprised of the catastrophe, he was inconsolable. First he raised a marble statue to the lady. It was probably the work of a Byzantine artist, and one of those stiff pieces of realism which mark alike the youth and dotage of sculpture. Then Raymond, forswearing poetry and all commerce with human kind, retired to a lonely hermitage, where he remained secluded for a year. At the end of that time Dame Alice de Montfort, daughter of the Viscount de Turenne, taking pity on the anchorite, sent to entreat that, for love of her, he would cast off his melancholy and return to society. She added that she was quite ready to bestow upon him her heart and her love, and that if he did not find it convenient to come to her, she was perfectly willing to visit him. Raymond received the message courteously, as befitted an accomplished knight. His widowhood, however, was not yet expired, for the code of love decreed that the death of a lover was to be lamented for two years, and Raymond was too true a troubadour not to observe the law. The love of such a lady as Dame Alice de Montfort, however, was not to be lost by a pedantic adherence to the strict letter of the law. So "little by little he returned to his former self and resumed the practices of love." Then, on the day that his widowhood terminated, he presented himself to dame Alice, who welcomed him with every possible token of joy. He swore to be her cavalier, and she vowed to be his mistress, "giving him the ring that she wore upon her finger as a pledge of faith. Then he began to sing again, and to do all things as of old, altogether forgetting his first love. And he took the marble figure which he had caused to be carved of Mabile de Ruis, and gave it to the monks of Montemayor, who

baptised it by the name of a saintess, and set it up in their church."

A cavaliér servénte of still another description was Pons de Capdueil, who is identical with the Pons de Brueil of Nostradamus. Of the highest birth and the largest possessions, he contrived to increase his wealth, without incurring the odium of avarice, by exercising a discrimination unknown to his contemporaries in his magnificence. This calculating exquisite attached himself to Adalais, the daughter of Bernard of Anduse, and the wife of a neighbour, Oizil, Lord of Mercure. The latter was a thoroughly fashionable husband, according to the ideas of the day. Not only did he permit the flirtation between his wife and his friend, but he even attended all the *fetes* with which the cavalier delighted to honour his mistress, and whereat the canzons which Pons composed for Adalais were invariably sung. Oizil took his full share in the games, and heard the ardent lyrics of his host with equanimity, if not with positive approval. The course of true love, however, never did run smooth ; and here, where there was absolutely nothing else to apprehend, a whim disturbed it very effectually. Strange to say, the whim did not arise on the side where one would have expected. Pons conceived the suspicion that the love of Adalais was not sincere. After worrying himself and her therewith for several months, he resolved to put it to the proof. Removing in haste to another district, he began to make ardent suit to the Viscountess of Rousillon. He expected a burst of passionate anger from Adalais, when she should hear of his conduct, and he was prepared to return the moment this unequivocal proof of affection had been shown. Adalais, however, merely forbade the name of the faithless Pons to be mentioned in her

presence, and continued her pursuit of pleasure as ardently as ever. Pons was disappointed, became uneasy, quitted the lady of Rousillon, and returned to pray for pardon. But Adalais refused to see him or to receive his messages. Then he resorted to the usual remedy of lovers in such predicaments—song—sending her the following apology :—

Ah, if you ask what urged me to depart—
'Twas not inconstancy, nor fickleness ;
It was a wish conceived of Love's excess,
To try the test of absence on your heart.
How grieved I, how regretted when to me
That you were touched nor word, nor token prov'd !
But think not that you're free although unmov'd :
From you I cannot, will not severed be !

Song, however, or at least his songs, seemed to have lost their influence over the spirit of Adalais : neither these verses, nor many others, produced any visible effect. He then employed three ladies to plead his cause. This was a common course with lovers forlorn. Among the pieces published by M. Raynouard, are several poetical epistles, in which ladies advocate the cause of disgraced lovers with their female friends. The advocates selected by Pons entered heart and soul into the affair, and finally procured his pardon. It was usual in such cases for the mistress, before consenting to receive back a repentant cavalier, to insist on being presented with a document, very legally drawn up, and bearing the signature of her rival, in which the latter gave a full discharge to her whilom lover. It is not stated that any such quittance was presented in this instance. Perhaps it was dispensed with because the Viscountess of Rousillon had not conformed to usage on her side. For it was generally understood that no lady was to receive attentions from the cavaliér servénte of

another, unless that other had dismissed him in due form, or had wronged him so flagrantly as to justify him in wooing elsewhere without further ceremony—things, neither of which had happened in this instance. Other conditions, too, were usually exacted, and it is probable that in this instance some such conditions were not omitted. We are not informed of the penance which Pons had to perform. But he certainly made the customary offering, a song, in which he confesses that he is now perfectly satisfied, and declares that henceforth he will keep strictly to the path of love, without deviating a hair's-breadth to the right or to the left. His new-born fidelity was not fated to be put to the test; shortly after his reconciliation with her, Adalais died, an event which he thus lamented:—

Ah, when the arrow pierced my queen,
  Why did it not pierce me?
Those who in life but one have been,
  But one in death should be.

There is a thought that through my pain
  Some solace to me brings—
That while I breathe her funeral strain
  She as an angel sings.

No more I'll love, no more I'll sing,
  Since she I love is gone;
But closing heart, and rending string,
  Die tuneless and alone.

He adhered to the resolve thus announced. Joining one of the military brotherhoods of the day, he became a warm and eloquent advocate of the Third Crusade, in the course of which he died.

The ladies for the most part preferred a cavaliér servénte of rank inferior to their own. While a man of very high birth was too much courted to remain strictly

or even moderately faithful, and while it was but natural that an equal should be restive under caprice, there were many reasons why "a friend" of lower grade should be both faithful and submissive. To the last, indeed, the stricter rules of gallantry were chiefly if not altogether applied. A high-born dame could be as severe as she pleased with a plebeian lover, without risk of the censure that, in those singular days, would assuredly have attached to her had she failed to fulfil her part in the covenant of gallantry, when the second party thereto was a man of position. Who else but a lover dazzled by the lofty station of his mistress, flattered out of all sober judgment by her occasional smiles, and, it must be added, in real need of her more substantial favours, would conform to such an absurd rule as is thus laid down by Amanieu des Escas:— "When it happens that your lady gives you real cause for jealousy, and that she denies what you have seen with your own eyes, you are to say, 'Dame, I am sure that your words are the very truth; but— I really thought I saw the other thing!'" When we perceive a lover dangling for years in the first or second degree of Love, as Vidal and Faudit, we may be sure that he is a plebeian. Neither the Lady of Albisso, nor Loba de Penantier, stood on such strict ceremony with the Counts of la March and Foix. Indeed, it was evidently considered a good jest on the part of a lady to give a low-born poet to understand that she loved him, and meant, after due probation, to admit him to the fourth and last degree of Druderie, until she had secured her purpose. Then— when she had sufficiently gratified her vanity and her vengeance, by having herself abundantly extolled and her rivals vilified in his verses—when he had driven the object of her resentment into the cloister, and col-

lected admirers round herself, she disabled the resentment of the poet, and won additional renown for herself, by dismissing him with some such glaring piece of scorn as that with which Maria of Abisso dismissed Gancelm Faudit. In the humiliations which he experienced as a cavaliér servénte, this Faudit may be accepted as a fair type of his class. The method by which Mary of Ventadour closed a prolonged flirtation with him is exceedingly characteristic of the state of society among the troubadours. It is thus related by an old story-teller:—"Gancelm Faudit loved Mary of Ventadour, for seven years, without reward of *plazer en dreg d' amor*. One day he appeared before his lady, and declared that she must make up her mind to accord him his 'right,' or to lose him. In the latter case he signified that he meant to find a lady more grateful, and that, while singing her praises, he would know how to distribute blame among those who deserved it at his hands. Then he quitted Mary in anger. Now Gancelm could indite very bitter servéntes, and Mary, who was much afraid of becoming their subject, knew not what to do. To accept him as her cavalier was a thing not to be thought of; but then how was she to escape his withering sarcasm? In her extremity she sent for her friend, Madame Audiart de Malamort, who was fair, gentle, and sage, and inquired what she would have her do. And Audiart said that she would neither advise Mary to keep Gancelm nor yet to dismiss him. She added that she knew a way to make him abandon his pursuit, without rancour or enmity towards the object thereof. Mary was comforted to hear this, and besought her friend to do the thing. So Audiart sent the following message to Gancelm:—'Ames may un petit auzel el punh que una grua volan el ciel?' (literally, love you better a little

bird in the hand than a crane flying in the sky?) This was a variation of a well known proverb, for the Provençals were hardly less given to such expressions than the Spaniards, from whom, indeed, they acquired the habit, just as the latter, in their turn, had acquired it from the Moors. Gauceln could not but guess the meaning wrapt up in this message, for Mary was a great lady and Audiart but a little one. Mounting his horse, he rode off to the residence of the latter, who received him graciously. There he asked what was meant by the crane and the little bird. Audiart replied that she had great pity of her visitor, seeing that he loved, and was not beloved in return; that the lady whom he had sung so long was the crane, and that herself was the little bird. 'Know' continued she, 'that though I am not so powerful as she is, yet I am full as young and gentle. Men say, too, that I am very fair. Still more, I have never yet had a cavalier; I have never given or broken a promise of love; I have never deceived any, or been deceived of any. But I have an exceeding desire to value and love, and to be valued and loved of one from whom I can receive praise and honour. I know that you are he who can give me all I desire; and you must know that I can well repay you. I wish to have you for my lover, and to make you the gift of myself and my love, even to that extent which caused you to quarrel with my lady Mary. If this be agreeable to you—if you accept my offer and consent to become my "friend"—I wish you, in token thereof, to make a song in which you will inform her, frankly and courteously, that you have found another lady as gentle and loving as could be desired, one who loves you and whom you love, and that you intend to follow her no more.' Gauceln was delighted, for

Audiart was very beautiful, and he did all that she commanded. But when he came to ask his reward, she refused, saying that she had merely promised in order to withdraw him from the hopeless and dangerous pursuit in which he had been involved for seven years. Gauceln then accused her of treachery, and Audiart admitted that she had indeed been treacherous, but that it was only to rescue him from a treachery that was leading him to death. Finding her immovable, the troubadour returned home, where he made a vow never to sing again." The vow was soon broken, and certainly would not have been formed, had Gauceln felt himself in a position to satisfy his wrath by satirizing either lady. But he had formally and voluntarily released the one from whatever engagement had subsisted between them, and that in terms which fully justified the deception practised by the other, since they admitted that he had sinned against a maxim universally recognised among gallants, and which is summed up in a few homely lines in daily use among ourselves, who seldom suspect that we derive these lines from the troubadours :—

It is good to be merry and wise ;
  It is good to be honest and true ;
It is good to be off with the old love—
  Before we be on with the new.

In her final interview with Faudit, it will be remarked that Dame Audiart spoke of his death as but too likely to result from perseverance in his attentions to Mary of Ventadour. Such, indeed, was the peril invariably dared by the low-class cavaliér servénte, after a certain stage in gallantry had been reached. So long as the lady remained indifferent to his suit, or so long as he contented himself with a few slight favours, his songs and

his passion were subjects of amusement to her noble relatives, and nothing more. But the moment it appeared that he became too ardent or she too condescending, nothing but speedy flight could preserve the singer from mutilation or death. If the lady, while caring nothing for the troubadour, had no desire that evil should befal him, she contrived to have an intimation of his danger conveyed to him. If she loved him, she added the means of flying—a purse and a good horse—to the hint. It was only in cases wherein such risks were to be apprehended that there was an attempt at real secrecy, though it must be added that such attempts were seldom or never successful. The troubadour could seldom refrain from boasting of his luck. And then there were people—rivals and others—who had an interest in penetrating the intrigue, and in disclosing it to those who were most likely to resent it.

While many ladies deceived the poets in order to command their pens, there were a few who did so in the view of acquiring the skill to wield those formidable weapons themselves—at a cheap rate. This was the experience of Geoffrey de Luc, a troubadour highly renowned in his day, and, as Nostradamus declares, no less a master of Greek and Latin than of his native tongue—an assertion that appears to us somewhat daring, since De Luc preceded Petrarch, who, in spite of earnest effort, never could acquire even a tolerable knowledge of Greek. This learned gentleman attached himself betimes to Flandrina of Flassan, a lady who was afterwards wedded to a relative, Renaud of Flassan, and of whom Geoffrey sang under the name of Blancheflower. She was clever and witty, and she showed an intense desire to be instructed in all the mysteries of rhyme and cadence, which were not a few, in the right use of similes, in the elaboration of conceit, and in the curious views of

natural science then entertained. Her lover, who was a proficient in all these things, could do no less than offer himself as tutor; and the more readily, since he well knew that many a fair student of song had concluded her studies by falling in love with her teacher. Master and pupil being equally earnest in this instance, there could be but one result of the studies. The Monk of the Golden Isle testifies that De Luc rendered his Flandrina so learned and skilful, "that repeatedly, when mingling with the most celebrated poets, as well female as male, in poetic disputation, she let it appear to all how great was the excellence of her poetry." But, alas that it should be said! some little time after her poetic education was completed, "this selfish and ungrateful woman abandoned her poet, and made no more account of him." He, not being able to cast off the bonds of affection quite so easily, gave himself up unreservedly to his grief. He neglected mundane affairs, and wandered about in the garb of woe, lamenting his hard fate, and accusing his mistress of cruelty and ingratitude. He was particularly severe on the very practical use she had made of his excessive affection, as appears in the following rather curious lines.

Her doubly in my debt I prove—
I taught her "la Gaye Saber."
She owes me, then, besides her love,
A something for my labour. I swear it by the mass!

Her while I sang and taught to sing,
What promises she made me!
But she, being mistress of the string,
Dismissed and never paid me—the most ungrateful lass!

Here I denounce her to the scorn
Of each poetic meeting;
For, while I served her night and morn,
She thought of nought but cheating—And making me an ass!

We cannot say that we find this effusion particularly

pathetic. The damsel, however, was sufficiently moved by it to make an elaborate response, in which she entered with intolerable minuteness into all the "theorie" and into all the finedrawn subtilities of Love. The whole of her argument tended to prove that he expected far too much for his services, and was otherwise and completely in the wrong. To the charge of ingratitude she retorted, with much adroitness, that it was he who was ungrateful, since he ought to have felt more than repaid for all his trouble and devotion, by the consciousness that her beauty—in fixing him as her suitor—had withdrawn him from degrading pursuits, and prevented the perpetration by him of ten thousand deeds of licentiousness. "The poet," remarks Nostradamus, "had no great esteem for this correction." Not so the prigs and pedants of both sexes, who, by this time, had reduced passion to a thing of metaphysics, to which they applied all the rules ever laid down by that mediæval deity, Aristotle, as expounded by the Schoolmen. Seeing that his sighs and his complaints were all in vain, Geoffrey made up his mind, in his despair, to let all things go as they might. As for himself, though he did not leap from the cliffs of Argentere, a cape on the Tuscan coast, which was the Leucadia of the troubadours, nor yet suspend himself from the convenient branches of an oak, nor even dive, in search of that truth which he had not found elsewhere, to the bottom of a well, it must be admitted that he took a step fully as desperate, since he became an active member of one of those poetical academies, which did far more than even the hated domination of the French to quench the true fire of song in the Provençal spirit.

If many ladies deceived and made laughing-stocks of troubadours of low birth, it must be allowed that quite

as many favoured them, even to the fourth degree. But in nearly all these instances, as truth compels us to remark, the appreciative dames had previously entered that paradoxical period of life which is called "a certain age," because the computation of years therein becomes a thing altogether uncertain. It was chiefly, if not exclusively, in these instances that any attempt was made to observe the rules laid down with respect to secrecy. For, as we have already observed, and in spite of all the specious arguments of the poets—some of which we have collected in another place—public opinion went dead against a liason between a high-born dame and a man of low degree. More serious still, the swords of indignant relatives were always ready to avenge the dishonour by the slaughter of the paramour. In this and other respects Peyre Rogiers was a very good sample of his class. He was in orders, a canon—some say of Arles, others of Claremont—but certainly a canon. "Seeing that he was young, handsome, and lively, and considering that he would live more profitable at large in the world than by confining himself to a religious life, wherein he found nothing but 'envy, hatred, and malice, and all uncharitableness'—he determined to quit the cloister and devote himself to Provençal poetry." And in like manner, we take leave to observe, reasoned and resolved many another excellent monk of the period. Peyre Rogiers adopted the amusing line, and began as an itinerant. "He devised fine and ingenious comedies, which, and *with great apparatus*, he recited in all the princely courts"—a sentence which goes to show that Messire Peyre was the organiser and conductor of a troop of strollers. It is added that "he won great renown, for all that he exhibited was good." In the course of time he attached himself to the court of

Ermengard, Countess of Narbonne, a lady who ruled her little sovereignity with much success for more than fifty years. She—one of the most renowned of the Presidents of the Courts of Love, an enthusiast in song, and the generous patron of singers—was now somewhat sere. With her the accomplished young clerk immediately became a prime favourite, and indeed her cavaliér servénte in the fourth degree. It was under the rose, for the experienced Ermengard knew what were likely to be the consequences of scandal. So, to distract attention from the *liason*, Peyre got up a violent flirtation with one of the companions of the countess, a young lady of high birth, Ughetto de Baux, better known as Bauzetta, or the little Baux. While sedulously concealing the real gallantry which he carried on with the countess, he took care to flaunt the flirtation rather ostentatiously before the eyes of the world. Everybody, including Bauzetta herself, believed that the latter was the lady addressed in the very warm lyrics of Peyre, under the name of Tort Naves (you are mistaken). It was a name that caused a good many to marvel. The countess, however, believing that the affair with the little Baux was not serious, and that she was the mistress, and therefore the person really sung, thought it remarkably appropriate. And so it was. Peyre intended it for both ladies, and both richly deserved it, for both were alike deceived. The flirtation with Ughetto was just as real as that with the countess. One is tempted to linger over the predicament of the poet at this juncture—over the worry and anxiety to which he must have subjected himself by his double-barrelled system of wooing. The countess was not to hear of the state of affairs between himself and Ughetto; the latter was to be kept in ignorance of his intimacy with the countess, and the whole

court was to be deceived as to both. The task was a difficult one under any circumstances; and here the circumstances were about as unfavourable as they could well be, since all the parties resided under the same roof. Still, if anybody could play with success the part which the poet had imposed upon himself, Peyre was just the man. His conventual education had tended to develope his thoroughly diplomatic nature in the way most congenial. At this period he was about as cool and calculating a gentlemen as ever made love to a lady and her attendant at the same time, if we may judge by his songs, of which the following is a fair specimen :—

Because you're in love must you needs be an ass?
While you silly watch thus are keeping
Beneath the cold moonshine, believe me, your lass
In comfort is supping or sleeping.

I tell you the dames are not wanting in wit;
They know how your follies to measure.
I never yet found that they valued a bit
What brought them nor profit nor pleasure.

Be it known there are many things more to her taste
Than all your fond moping and pining—
A chain round her neck, or an arm round her waist
She'd rather by far you were twining.

Now don't be too eager, for that's just the way
To win first-rate cause to be jealous.
"That lad I may have when I please," she will say;
And so she will flirt with the fellows.

You'll find, if you whine and pull faces so droll,
That she'll choose a practical lover;
And while, like a ghost, round her chamber you stroll,
That he'll be within it—in clover.

Even the cool Peyre Rogiers, however, could not succeed in making love to a pair of companions for any length without a hitch. An exposure—not a partial

thing, but one in which the double intrigue was perfectly exhibited—took place, and Ermengard, being greatly blamed, was compelled to dismiss the poet, as she had already dismissed the little Baux. Peyre took again to the road, though not very greatly grieved. He knew that such a glowing scandal was precisely the thing to make the fortunes of a man of his profession. And Fortune, no doubt, would have blessed him right speedily, had it not been for a trifling accident. The members of the House of Baux were, it seems, in a hurry to wed their giddy little kinswoman, and they entertained the notion that the death of the gay deceiver was a necessary preface to the ceremony. So, gathering in tolerable numbers, and arming themselves to the teeth, they waylaid Messire Peyre as he was "jogging along the road," and put a period to his songs and his seductions by slitting his windpipe.

Remarkably like Peyre Rogiers in his love-making, and not unlike Rudel in his fate, was the poet Guilhem Adhemar. He was a stray shoot from the stock of Grignan, one of the noblest in Provence, who, having failed in every other profession, including that of soldier—a sort of failure not at all complimentary to one of gentle blood in those fighting days—betook himself, as a final resource, to the profession of troubadour. He was one of the countless cavaliers of M. Raynouard's Sappho, the Countess Die, a collection of whose poems he made a point of carrying about with him, and some of whose verses he made a point of singing in every company. He also was one of the many with whom, as she does not forget to tell us in her songs, she made use of the convenient pretext of pilgrimage in order to carry on her intrigues with the greater freedom. But beneath his ostentatious show of passion for the countess

Guilhem Adhemar concealed a real and an ardent attachment for her niece, who bore the same name still as herself. He was not much of a singer; indeed, his poetic renown would seem to have been in a large measure a reflection from that of the Provençal Sappho. His remains are chiefly of that lower order of poetry—the satiric. Still, there are a few tender pieces among them, though even these are little more than manifest imitations of other lyrists—the following fragment, probably addressed to one lady and intended for the other, being a tolerable specimen:—

The summer comes with all its flowers,
And orchards rich with fruit;
The birds are warbling in the bower,
And why should I be mute?

In summer woods and summer airs
Delight I ever find;
And now my heart is free from cares—
The maid I love is kind.

The news of the approaching marriage of the younger countess was a death stroke to the troubadour; it laid him on a bed from whence he never rose again. The truth was now disclosed. How it was received by the elder countess history has not recorded. Adhemar begged to be visited by the younger lady before he died, and not in vain. Such requests were common down to a much later period; nor was it considered consistent with Christian charity to give them a denial. The letters of Busini relate a remarkable instance that occurred in Florence in 1530. Martelli, one of the unsuccessful champions in the singular duel that distinguished the siege of the Tuscan capital, when dying of his wounds, entreated that the lady of his love might be allowed to visit him. She had never given him the

slightest encouragement; nevertheless, his request was complied with, the lady being led to his chamber by her husband. The latter is considered by Busini, who evidently had no soul for chivalrous usages, as rather too ready to illustrate the proverb by driving his goat dangerously near the edge of the precipice. The young countess was led by her mother to the couch of Adhemar. He, who was at the last gasp, raised her hand to his lips, and died in the act of kissing it. Both ladies were appalled. The younger took the veil in a convent of Tarascon, where she devoted her leisure to the versification of a local legend. The elder charged herself with the obsequies of the deceased poet. "Over his remains she raised a mausoleum, on which she had engraven, with marvellous skill, various heroic deeds and enterprises of chivalry, after the manner of Egyptian hieroglyphics."

Bernard of Ventadour had a narrow escape from a fate like that which befel Peyre Rogiers. He was the son of a baker of Ventadour, who happened to attract the attention of Ebles, the lord of the place, at an early age. This Ebles was one of the most noted magnates of the south. He was valiant, witty, and wealthy; and he was especially distinguished for generosity and magnificence. A man of talent himself, he quickly detected the nascent genius of the baker's child, and, removing him to the castle, took much pleasure in developing him into a poet. Such things were not unusual: it is recorded that the Dauphin of Auvergne, a man of much superior rank to Ebles, did not disdain to act as the poetic Mentor of Hughes of St. Cyr. By the time that Bernard had attained maturity, the Lord of Ventadour was declining in life. He had also perpetrated a folly common to

men of his years and character in taking to himself a young and beautiful wife, of whom it was said that, like other gay gentlemen who wed late in life, he was exceedingly jealous. Much pleased was he, then, to find that the songs of the domestic poet, which, probably by order of Ebles himself, were all addressed to the domestic beauty, rendered the said beauty utterly indifferent to other praise. Perhaps the viscount considered that the poet whom he had manufactured—"out of fire bricks and mouldy crusts"—was his private property; that the songs, therefore, were as much his own as though they had proceeded complete from his lordly brain, and that the subject of these songs could not but consider her gratitude due exclusively to himself. If he reasoned in this way, he erred in common with a good many others. Ebles was not blind to the impression that his attractive viscountess had made on the poet; but he was not at all disposed to quarrel with Bernard on that account. He saw clearly that a dash of real passion had greatly improved the songs of the latter, and he never dreamt that his exceedingly aristocratic dame could respond to the sentiments of one so lowly born. Ebles, however, was deceived. Bernard was handsome and amiable, and the countess, ere long, fell just as deeply in love with him as he had fallen with her. Up to this period the canzons of the poet had been akin to the following:—

While winter passes with its snows,
And spring time blossoms fair,
My love no change of season knows;
Tis always winter there.

Love has its summer blooming bright,
Its autumn rich with fruit;
And all save I—unhappy wight!—
In turns their joys salute.

Am I condemned Love's woe to taste,
Nor ever know its bliss?
Must I my life in penance waste,
Nor ever do amiss?

I'll cease my song, away I'll rove!
Yet no, I'll linger nigh!
Perhaps my constancy may move
The Dame I cannot fly.

Now, however, he adopted a gayer measure, and with the full approval of his patron, who was not yet instructed of the cause. That, however, the husband discovered much earlier than the pair desired. They were about as prudent as lovers usually are in such circumstances, and contrived to excite suspicion at an early period. First Ebles detected stolen glances and responsive blushes; then he caught them whispering behind doors; finally there was placed in his hands a fair copy of a very passionate song, in which the poet went into ecstacies over a certain delicious kiss, which he compared to the spear of Achilles, in its power to wound and heal. It was not the only time the pretty conceit had been used, nor was it the last. It has been allowed to pass uncensured in Dante, Chaucer, and Shakspeare; but critics have been quite indignant at its employment by Bernard of Ventadour, who, they think, had no right to manifest even the slightest token of acquaintance with the classics. The excellent critics however, forgot that this was emphatically a Latin age, that the learned controversies of Abelard and his compeers were subjects of universal curiosity, and that the troubadours found it indispensable to their success to keep themselves abreast with the progress of knowledge, and therefore to know something of scholastic doings and scholastic learning. Ebles was even more dissatisfied with this sonnet than the critics. He read it, to

flame up like a mediæval gentleman, though certainly with less fury than some that could be named. He did not fling his wife out of the window, like one jealous husband; nor her waiting-maid, like another jealous husband; nor wife, waiting maid, confidant, and lover, like a third jealous husband, the excellent Meinherd of Bavaria. Perhaps none of his windows were wide enough to allow the performance of the feat; perhaps, too, his muscles were not "in condition"—which is very likely, considering his years. He did what he could, however, and that was something. He stormed and swore at the top of a very loud voice; he ran amuck through the castle, beat the pages who happened to cross his path, kicked the dogs, and flung about the platters, which, being of pewter, sustained little damage, but raised a tremendous clatter. If our readers ask why he did the last trick, we can only reply that it was a way they had in the olden time. Of course nobody would think of such a thing in the nineteenth century, because, of course, we are all more civilised; and then, you know, pewter platters have departed with the olden time—a fact that in itself would render the raising of a clatter by their means somewhat difficult. Then Ebles cooled down, ordered his wife into close confinement, and despatched a party of halberdiers to arrest the poet. The last he swore, by half the saints and all the demons, to hang by the neck from a beam in his lady's chamber, and there to let him dangle as long as the hemp would hold, for the delectation of his paramour. Such deeds were not unusual in the days of old, as is shown in one of the stories of Boccaccio, having indeed given rise to that grimmest of proverbs—"there is a skeleton in every house." Fortunately for Bernard, who, it seems, was absent at the outbreak of the storm, he had friends

at the castle, and by one of these he was apprised of all that had happened, and of his impending fate. Bernard acted like a wise man, though hardly like a devoted lover. Leaving the lady to the tender mercies of her irate spouse, he took to his heels on the instant, nor did he pause in his flight till he found himself safe at the court of Eleanor of Aquitaine, the very gay wife of one who was soon to become King of England. Here the poet was safe, and something more. The affair at Ventadour and his flight therefrom, had secured him, and at once, all that renown which other troubadours of the same class could only achieve, by dint of talent and perseverance, after years of wandering and in the face of endless hardships. What befel the viscountess has not been noticed by tradition: it is probable that she made her peace with Ebles, and that she conducted her further loves with more discretion. As for Bernard, he was taken into the service of Eleanor, whose smiles soon taught him to forget the lady of Ventadour. He sang his new mistress in many songs, of which the following gives us a glimpse of some of the "rights" claimed by the cavaliér servénte :—

A thousand times over she breathes the glad news
She'll yield, and the pretty deceiver
Her breaches of faith can so sweetly excuse,
That her lover is fain to believe her.

I bow to her wishes, I bask in her smiles;
She does with me just as she pleases;
Which is not as I please; with wile upon wile
My heart past all bearing she teases!

From blaming I shrink; yet ungentle she'll be
To her Knight, if she cease not to slight him,
And, since he's her "friend" in the highest degree,
With his dues, as his duties, delight him—

To let him attend while her pillow is spread,
And while o'er the task each maid lingers;
To let him kneel down by the side of her bed
And—*her buskin unlace with* his fingers.

The last passage is not unlike one occurring in a clever book of Italian travel of the last generation. "I once saw a lady" writes Forsyth, "bid her Signor Cavaliere stir up her fire ('Attozate il mio fuoco'). At the word of command he put his hand under her petticoat, removed the chafing dish, stirred the coals with a small silver shovel which he kept in his pocket, replaced the pan, and readjusted her dress." The mediæval practice alluded to by Bernard of Ventadour was hardly so formidable as it looked. It was, indeed, little more than an attempt to carry out the leading idea of the gallantry of the age. Love was looked upon just as a species of feudal service, wherein the gentleman played the part of vassal, and the lady that of suzerain, and on stated occasions it was the duty of the vassal, and his privilege also—since, so long as he was allowed to perform these duties, his rights were secure—to serve his lord at table, and even to prepare his couch and lay him thereon. Bernard's felicity in the land of the Gascons was terminated by the removal of Eleanor to England, an event which drew from him this song:—

Had I the wings of the swallow,
Through the air to cleave my way,
How quickly my mistress I'd follow,
My heart at her feet to lay.

I'd hasten the mountains over,
I'd cross the foaming tide,
Around her steps to hover,
And nestle her couch beside.

Each morning, with its singing,
Awakes me the nightingale,
To my mem'ry sweetly bringing
Of all our loves the tale.

I blame not the notes thus stealing
Away mine hours of rest;
I find a solace in feeling
That once, at least, I was blest.

The playful breeze that bloweth
From where my lady lies
Empalaced, around me streweth
The scents of Paradise.

Never can I forget her,
Though worlds were us to part!
No; the graver, Love, has set her
Image too deep in my heart.

Being deprived of the sight of Eleanor, and, what was more, of a liberal patroness, the "Son of Song" next sought and obtained the protection of the Count of Toulouse. In the court of this prince he obtained the favours of the Countess of Beaucire, who is designated by Nostradamus "a princess of singular beauty and gentleness"—a phrase which is always dropping from the pen of the old professor of the occult, and which means about as much as Brantome's "belle et honneste." In the service of this princess he continued until she died, when Bernard, feeling no further vocation to love, took a course often adopted by troubadours in a similar mood, and entered a convent. There it is said that he employed himself in imitating Ovid. None of these imitations have survived—for a very good reason. The monk of the Golden Isle says that the caligraphy was so vile that it was impossible to read it without recalling the scribe to life. One singularity in the biography of Bernard of Ventadour must not be omitted.

The story of his love passage with the viscountess has been preserved from oblivion by the son of the lady, who seems to have thought with the Abbe de Sade, that, if one could not become notorious by one's own good or bad deeds, the next best thing was to link one's name with the notoriety of an ancestor. This worthy peer "related the whole matter to a learned personage of the time whose name is not known," but who, like many another learned gentleman, appears to have found congenial employment in perpetuating a pretty piece of scandal.

Another tolerable specimen of the low-born cavaliér servénte and his fortunes is contained in the story of Aymerie of Beauvoir. He was a Gascon, who had been brought up to the Church, but who quitted the cloister at much the same age, and for much the same reasons, as Peyre Rogiers. Him, Madame Gentel Ruis, a lady of the great house of Valette, accepted as her "friend," and retained as such until the voice of scandal, threatening her with the usual infamy, and him with the as usual assassination, compelled them to part. He fled as men fly the plague, fast enough and far enough, never halting until he had placed himself completely beyond the reach of the vengeful la Valettes, in the Court of Provence, which seems to have been the general resort of troubadours in difficulties, amorous or pecuniary. In this court there was a very learned lady who had graduated in every one of the seven liberal arts—not a very unusual thing, as we have had occasion to observe more than once. An acquaintance with these seven arts did not mean very much; still it was not to be obtained without long study and much cost. for the teachers of the good old time had the trick, common to the quacks of all time, of prolonging the period of their services, and squeezing the purses of their victims to the

utmost. Barbossa then, must have reached years of maturity before her education could have been pronounced complete. Besides all this learning, Nostradamus declares that she possessed "immortal beauty, an infinity of graces, and many good and saintly habits." Among the last was a strongly pronounced inclination for the cavaliér servénte; for our excellent authority does not forget to remark that "she was the most gallant in the world." It was a maxim that no man could sing without having a mistress of whom to sing; and as Aymerie had either to sing or starve, he was bound to provide him with a mistress as speedily as might be. No doubt his experiences with Madame Gentel Ruis had taught him some discretion. He had little wish to be sent packing again, and still less to be reasoned with by the wrathful relatives of any lady, as St. Louis recommended all good Christians to reason with unbelievers—that is, with three feet or so of cold steel. After searching the Court of Provence with careful eye, Aymerie considered that the learned, devout, and gallant Princess Barbossa was about the safest object therein, and her praises he determined to sing. The game of love began at once, and it must be allowed that the lady played her part therein to perfection. She was duly severe at the outset; she softened by just degrees; and she admitted the gentleman to the fourth stage precisely at the proper time. His muse must have found it difficult to soar at all times to the height expected by Barbossa, but that it was fairly successful in its flights the following choice collection of exaggerated sentiments will show:

Oh perfect one! unto your sway
My heart I wholly gave,
A docile and, I grieve to say,
An unrewarded slave.

If mercy comes not to my aid,
Shall I unfaithful prove?
No, never! I must low be laid
Before I cease to love.

I'll hope and wait, whate'er my pain,
Until you deign to bless;
Such hope I'd rather entertain
Than all elsewhere possess.

Your friendship, Princess, then, I'll try,
Till softer feelings move;
And at the worst—well, I can die,
But never cease to love!

And Dame Barbossa could act just as heroically as the troubadour sang. One day, when she was promenading in due state, her maids being around, and her lover at an humble distance, she happened to drop her glove. Aymerie hastened to pick it up, and, kissing it devoutly, he presented it to its owner, who received it with a gracious smile. The damsels were indignant at this flagrant breach of decorum. They remonstrated with their mistress, greatly wondering how she, of all ladies living, could permit such a thing in public. "Permit such a thing!" replied the Princess, putting on her grandest air; "I would have you to know, my maidens, that ladies of honour cannot grant too many favours, in an honest way, to those men of genius who have the power of immortalizing them in song." The story is evidently the original of one manufactured centuries later for the Queen of Charles VII. and Alain Chartier. The incident of the glove was commemorated by Aymerie in some verses which we have given in another place, and they were followed by many more in the same stilted vein. This pretty amour had a very suitable close. Dame Barbossa retired to a convent of the

strictest rule, where she was forbidden to see or speak to worldlings, except through a grating; and her cavalier died of grief—a bit of tragedy that, to our thinking, tends to heighten the high comedy of the whole affair.

Of another of these cavaliér servéntes a story is told which has been used to an unlimited extent by succeeding poets and novelists. It has, of course, been improved upon in its passage through so many brains; but, as it happens, it is of a kind that cannot be completely twisted out of its original shape. Guilhem Durante, of Montpellier, was a renowned lawyer, remarkable, among other things, for a tenacious memory. Some attributed this peculiarity to "a certain stone set in gold which he always carried about with him." His own explanation thereof was more probable. He held that gluttony and wine-bibbing dulled the wit and obscured the memory; he therefore practised the strictest temperance. Perhaps, too, his memory was strong or weak, as he liked or disliked the subject upon which it was exercised. It was remarked that, "did he read a fine romance, in prose or verse, but once over, he could recite it word for word." This lawyer of temperate habits and powerful memory was also an "exalted poet." And being a poet, it follows that he had a mistress to inspire his strains, who was a relative of his own, of the name of Balba. "Through extreme curiosity, he investigated the hour of the birth of this lady. The result of his researches he communicated to a medical friend, who was also an astrologer, beseeching him to make it the subject of astral calculation. The medico did so, foretelling to Durante, according to the judgment of astrology, all that was to befal Balba, and stating, in particular, that her death would be attended by extraordinary circumstances, but that she was fated to enjoy a lengthened life. For several years

did the lawyer-poet bear all this faithfully in his memory, according to the saying of the sage. At length the time arrived when the prediction was to be fulfilled. One day Balba was taken suddenly and alarmingly ill, the next she improved somewhat, but on the third she was so greatly afflicted by her malady as to be accounted dead, and preparations were made for her interment. The report of this sudden death coming to the ears of the poet, he was so much affected thereby that he died himself, and was buried on the same day as Balba. While the latter lay in her coffin, and while her obsequies were yet in progress, she began to breathe, and then to wail—a thing that mightily astonished the bystanders. Being removed from the grave, and promptly aided, she was carried home alive, and likely to live. During her convalescence she was informed of the strange and sudden death of Durante, and such was its effect upon her that she entered a convent forthwith. There she spent many years, dying at length, and unmistakably, at the ripe age of sixty."

Another cavaliér servénte has supplied Boccaccio with the original of a story which Dryden has put into vigorous English verse. "In his youth Bertrand of Marseilles was clownish and stupid. But, mixing among the Provençal beauties, and being 'seized or possessed' of love for one of them, the damsel Porceletta, of the ancient house of Porcelet of Arles, he acquired as much polish, and as much knowledge in the science of love, as most people. And so, increasing in sense and worth, he became in time a good poet." The love that caused such a striking change in this Provençal Cimon did not extend its influence to his Iphigenia. Of the many doleful lyrics that he sent her, we select one for imitation. The said imitation, we wish it to be understood, is much less of a caricature than most of our readers

would be inclined to suspect; and, besides, it is, as Michael Cassio would say, "a more exquisite song than the other."

I said my heart was like to break,
  And that my soul was cast,
By passion's tide, just like a wreck
  Disabled by the blast.

I swore an oath that what I felt
  Was like to turn my head;
I sighed—such sighs!—and then I knelt,
  But not a word she said!

I preached of Grace in moving strain;
  I told her she was fair;
I whispered what renown she'd gain,
  By listening to my prayer.

I spoke of needle and of pole,
  And other things I'd read;
But unto all my rigmarole—
  Why not a word she said!

I prayed her then my love to test,
  To send me near or far—
I'd squelch the dragon in his den,
  I'd yoke him to my car.

I'd risk for her, as faithful knight,
  My eyes, or limbs, or head,
Being quite prepared to fool or fight—
  But not a word she said!

I argued that, if poor in cash,
  Yet I was rich in mind;
Of rivals vowed to make a hash,
  When such I chanced to find.

I knit my brows, I clenched my hand,
  I tried to wake her dread;
In quiet wise, you'll understand—
  But not a word she said!

This was followed by a piece on another strain:

Mercy severe, and Joy delayed too long,
And disappointed Hope, will either slay,
Or from that maid ungrateful turn away
The love that in my breast is now so strong.
Ah, wherefore is it that she does this wrong!
That I in vain to her must sigh and pray!
Why leave me without cause, and why betray
This heart that her has loved so well and long?

On one occasion he followed the example of Vidal, and stole a kiss, a theft which the lady facilitated by going to sleep in a convenient place. The kiss was sufficiently respectful, since the poet confined it to the lady's eyes. Nevertheless it awoke her in a towering rage, which the following canzon, somewhat too much in the style of Perdigon, did not tend to alleviate:

Like a peasant who thinks he has lit on a casket
O'erflowing with silver and gold—
To find he has only dug up a basket
That nothing but rubbish doth hold—

So was my delight when I thought I had found in you
A heart full of sweetness and truth
Changed to grief when instructed that nothing was sound in you
Except just your outside and youth.

Away, then, I'll wander a lady to seek out
In whom truth and constancy meet,
Instead of yourself, who, the plain fact to speak out,
Are only a heap of deceit.

The lady ended the matter by wedding another, whereupon Bertrand retired with his disappointed hopes to a monastery—an action that we can hardly understand, since, according to the theory of Trouvers' love, marriage was precisely the thing to make Porceletta a perfect mistress.

We now come to the world-renowned story of William

of Cabestang. We shall preface our version thereof with a few remarks anent its credibility, and, by implication, the credibility of all similar legends. It is told in many different forms. Nostradamus gives one, Boccaccio another, and the deeply-read commentator on Petrarch and Dante, Velutello, a third. These writers do not differ capriciously, or without authority. Their respective details have been drawn from manuscripts, most of which are yet extant, and several of which have been published by Raynouard. Even the most poetic, and therefore the most improbable, of these versions, that of Boccaccio, agrees in all essentials—the genius which animates it excepted—with one of the old Provençal *raconteurs*. As to the legend itself, we consider that, like the best of our own old ballads, it has had a foundation in actual fact. But those who, like ourselves, have attempted to identify the ballads alluded to with historic events, will understand how poetic tradition deals with facts, distorting and embellishing them until the picture is no more like the original than a moonlight shadow is like the object by which it is cast. The ballad of Chevy Chace was undoubtedly founded on the fight of Otterbourne; but, in passing through the brain of the poet, the incidents have quite lost their primitive shape. So it is with the Scotch ballad of Bothwell Brigg, wherein separate events are so oddly interwoven. So also it is with the story of Fair Rosamond. And so, finally, it is with the stories of the troubadours. Of the last there is not one that is not varied in many ways, and the reason is, because these legends were preserved by men much less anxious to make their narratives true than to make them striking. Story-telling, it should be remembered, was as much a portion of the profession of the troubadour as singing; and in his stories, as in

his songs, he found, for the most part, what was chiefly amusing in his own fancy. One principal object was to be interesting, and another to excel his rivals. To make a good legend, then, he never hesitated to embellish promising materials, or to tack together in one romantic whole the more striking portions of many different tales.

According to all the traditions, William of Cabestang belonged to an ancient but decayed family of Roussillon, a province included in the present department of the Eastern Pyrenees. There is a place called Cabestang still to be found about a league and a quarter south-east of Perpignan. The name is such a one as might be expected to occur on the dreary flat, lined with shallow lagoons, which borders the Mediterranean in that quarter. It means the Hollow of the Pond, and signifies that the district was at one period submerged. The first portion of William's story has been carefully omitted by most of those who have written concerning him of late years. It is not consistent with the amiable, interesting, and guileless character which they prefer to consider him. Like so many other troubadours, he commenced his career as a wanderer. Possessing a fine person, and, as his remains prove, considerable poetic ability, he met with fair success. Visiting the Court of Provence, he there attached himself as cavaliér servénte to a great lady, Berengeria de Baux, daughter of the Viscount of Marseilles, on the usual conditions—songs on his part, and graces on hers, which, in instances like this, wherein the lady was very great, and the gentleman very small, included money, horses, and clothing, as well as smiles. Berengeria, it would seem, like many another of the chosen dames of the poorer troubadours, was somewhat past her prime. She certainly did not rely on her charms, or on her very substantial recognition of his

devotion, to retain her William in allegiance. She resorted to a device which, as we have elsewhere shown, was not uncommon in such cases, and administered a love potion. The results were not happy; the draught distorted William's face into the semblance of a hideous, endless laugh. Fortunately for him, he had contracted an intimacy with a dealer in poisons and antidotes—a circumstance which does not exalt the poet of the Salt Pond in our estimation—and, by the aid of this shady character, his countenance was relieved of its appalling grin. Having no wish to play the hyena in this way against his will, he hastened to quit Provence without taking leave of the delightful Berengeria. He next appears in his native province, holding a dubious post in the household of Raymond, the wealthy Lord of Castel-Roussillon, a place about a league and a quarter east of Perpignan, and within the same distance of William's ancestral marsh. Indeed, lines connecting the three points would form an equilateral triangle. This noble, like all the jealous husbands who figure in the legends of the troubadours, was somewhat ancient, and had, of course, a charming wife. With respect to her it may be remarked that a Viscountess of Castel-Roussillon appears in the story of Guilhem of St. Legier, and also in the story of Pons of Capdueil, cavaliers who were both the contemporaries of him of Cabestang. It is probable, then, that the same lady was in turn the mistress of all three. If not, well then Raymond of Castel-Roussillon must have been as unfortunate in the matter of wives as the son of the unfortunate favourite of "Good Queen Bess." The poet and the viscountess fell in love with one another, and there anent the romance people tell a delightfully lackadaisical story. According to them, this not very

delicate lover of the not very delicate Berengeria de Baux—this personage so well acquainted with the compounders of philtres and antidotes—was so exceedingly bashful that he really could not venture to say a single word to his impassioned viscountess. Such bashfulness might have been all very well had the case been one wherein the siege of the lady's heart had to be conducted according to the strict rules of gallantry, which laid it down that the respectful timidity of which we have already discoursed, was to be observed in the preliminary stages. But this was not the fact. The lady of Castel-Roussillon is termed by the older writers Torisonda, a name suspiciously like an uncomplimentary Spanish word. The romance people style her Marguerite, which is a favourite name with them, and one which they apply to any dame for whom they desire to excite the sympathies of their readers. Well, Madame Torisonda, or Marguerite, who had no wish to observe the strict rules of gallantry in this instance, having sighed and ogled, and squeezed the hand, and even trod on the toes* of the timid young man any number of times without drawing a response, at length determined to pop the question herself, which she did on the first opportunity.

The scene of question-popping, which the romance people appear to think tender and touching in the extreme, we find comic. There was a page on the watch at the top of the stairs, another stood at each end of the corridor, and the trustiest of damsels kept the entrance to the chamber. Inside stood a beautiful lady, in magnificent attire and graceful attitude, and by her side was a handsome young man, blushing to the tip of

* All these tokens of love are mentioned in a canzon by Saveri de Mauleon.

his ears, keeping his eyes fixed on his toes, and seeming sadly at a loss what to do with his legs and his arms.

"William," said the charming viscountess, in the sweetest of voices, "suppose a lady—such a lady as myself—happened to fall in love with you, do you think you could respond to her affections?"

After many hums and haws, and many trials of the strength of the floor with his toes, the bashful youth managed to reply that he might possibly do the thing of which the lady inquired, provided he were quite sure that there was no intention to jest at his expense.

"Quite right," replied the viscountess. "But tell me now, are you really ah—so—ah—so inexperienced that you cannot distinguish between jest and earnest in such a matter?"

William said not a word, but he looked as if he really were verdant, even to that extent.

The lady pouted, pulled a flower to pieces, strode hastily up and down the apartment, hesitated as to whether it were worth her while to think any more in tender guise of a youth so disgustingly raw, and finally determined to make another trial. She drew very close to the youth, placed her little hands on both his shoulders, which thrilled beneath the touch, brought her lips—full, red, and moist — perplexingly close to his, and, while her ringlets dangled teazingly against his nose, and her breath fanned the blood in his cheeks into a white heat, inquired, "Do you think, dearest William that I could jest with you?"

The rest of the scene remains undescribed. So it shall remain for us, who have no desire to evoke it from that inexhaustible magazine whence a recent commander-in-chief is said to have evoked fourteen victories—the depths of our internal consciousness.

Within the next few weeks Castel-Roussillon, and, indeed, all the castles in the neighbourhood, were enlivened by a series of passionate songs in this style :—

I wandered through a garden, 'twas filled with flowers the rarest,
And of all these brilliant blossoms I culled the very fairest ;
So fine its shape, so sweet its scent, its hues so richly blent,
That heaven, I'm sure, created it itself to represent.
My lady is so charming, my lady is so meek,
Such tenderness is in her smile, such beauty in her cheek ;
Such kisses blossom on her lip, such love illumines her eye—
Oh, never was there neath the stars a man so blest as I !
I gaze, I thrill with joy, I weep, in song my feelings flow—
A song of hope, delight, desire, with passion all aglow—
A fervent song, a pleading song, a song in every line—
Of thanks and praise to her who lists no other songs but mine.
Oh, hear me sweet ! Oh, kiss me sweet ! Oh, clasp me tenderly !
Thy beauties many, many touch, but none that love like me.

The lovers were cautious, the pages and damsels were trusty, and no name was mentioned in the lyrics ; but, somehow or other, an inkling of what was going forward reached Raymond of Castel-Roussillon. He took a course that shows him to have been by no means the headlong and ferocious monster that he has been painted. Instead of doing like other jealous husbands in similar circumstances—kicking the songster out of doors, or causing him to be waylaid and knocked on the head, while he locked up the erring dame—he actually went quietly to Messire William and demanded an explanation ! William was ready with one entirely to his satisfaction. He declared, with unblushing cheek and unfaltering tone—which shows that he was no longer the raw and timid youth of a few weeks before—that he was devoted, heart and soul, to Agnes, the sister of Torisonda and the wife of a neighbouring baron, that to her his songs were addressed, and that Agnes and himself were greatly grieved by the jealousy of Baron Robert of

Tarasca, and sorely in need of an obliging friend who would enable them to meet in safety Raymond was delighted to have his suspicions removed in this fashion; he felt really grateful to William; and, in his gratitude, he volunteered to play the part of friend between him and Agnes. He did so there and then, starting off at once to the chateau of his brother-in-law, where William was exceedingly well received. A very pleasant evening followed, in the course of which William contrived to apprise Agnes of the state of affairs; and Agnes, being a lady of gallantry herself, as well as the sister of Torisonda, did her best to aid the deception being practised on Raymond. So, also, did her husband; for, like all the gentlemen of that era, he dearly loved a joke; and the best of all jokes among the troubadours was the cheating of a jealous husband. This particular specimen of the favourite pastime transpired, and became, for the time, the principal subject of laughter to the country round; nor did anybody enjoy the thing more than the parties chiefly concerned, Torisonda and William. In fact they were more forward than anyone else in saying smart things concerning the stupidity of the wittol. Instigated by his mistress, the poet went so far as to make it the subject of his songs, of which he had the consummate impudence to inscribe the following to Raymond:—

Your dame, all allow, is a sweet bit of stuff,
  And I'm not a bad-looking fellow;
While you, my old veteran, are wrinkled and tough,
  And your skin's most uncommonly yellow.
She sees that I'm brisk; I see she's divine;
  We both see that you're old and wheezy.
You can't shut her eyes, and you cannot shut mine—
  So you might just as well take it easy,
  Old boy—you might just as well take it easy.

I'm teased with fond wishes I cannot repress—
'Tis precisely the same with your beauty;
And when such as we are can steal a caress,
We're sometimes oblivious of duty.
'Tis nature, you know it, then wherefore repine,
And bounce about crusty and breezy?
You can't shut her heart, and you cannot shut mine—
So you might just as well take it easy,
Old boy—you might just as well take it easy.

In due time the whole matter was disclosed to Raymond, and every one of the songs submitted to his notice by his goodnatured friends. It was a time when revenge was esteemed a virtue, and Raymond determined to be avenged to the full extent of the wrongs that he had suffered and the insults that he had received. These, with all due respect to the romance people, we are bound to pronounce extreme. Provençal gallants were usually content with the perpetration of one crime, unless when driven to a second in what they considered self-defence. But here, in addition to being injured, the husband had been gulled and mocked in very wantonness, like the merest dotard. In resolving, as he did, that the poet should die, he did not venture one inch beyond law as it existed in most places, and custom as it existed everywhere. William was in the service of Raymond, and the Feudal Code defined the seduction of the wife of the master by the servant, as treason. True the laws of Aragon, of which Raymond was the subject, had been greatly mitigated in this particular under a race of gallant monarchs. Instead of burning, the ancient punishment of adulterers—that is, when the injured party declined to slay them himself—such offenders were now merely liable, the female to imprisonment in a convent, and the male to a fine. But these milder laws were never invoked by any but the

trading classes. Members of the aristocracy still arrogated the right to slay the seducer, which had been conferred upon them by the ancient statutes.

Raymond slew William immediately, and with his own hand. The more probable accounts state that the parties met—each being well attended—near the lower mountains of the Pyrenees, and that the lover fell in single combat with the outraged husband. It would seem that he made neither an energetic nor an honourable resistance; that, in fact, he displayed a good deal of a commodity which is occasionally found in the possession of such fascinating youths, and which is termed "the white feather." The Monk of Montemayor, who lived not long afterwards, and who spent much time in collecting facts respecting the troubadours, denounces William as "a fool and a coward" for allowing himself to be slain by "a vile pig of a jealous husband." And here, we think, terminates the truth of the legend—that is, if there be any truth in it all. According to the romance people, Raymond cut off the head of the beau and tore out his heart. He had the latter cooked and laid before his wife as a delicate morsel, watching her in grim silence as she ate. Then, he declared that she had swallowed the heart of her lover, and, in confirmation of his words, produced the bloody head. She fell senseless in horror to recover in despair. Rising with the gestures of a Clytemnestra, she taunted her husband into drawing his sword upon her. Then she fled shrieking before him to the summit of the castle, from whence she flung herself into the arms of death. It is added that the fate of the lovers excited general sympathy; that their friends, aided by a royal contingent, levelled the castles of Raymond with the ground; that the ferocious lord himself was deprived of

his estates, and imprisoned for life by Alfonso; and that the gallant monarch, causing the bodies of the unfortuates to be laid in a magnificent tomb inscribed with their story, decreed that thenceforth this tomb—which stood in the principal church of Perpignan—should be the term of an annual procession of all the faithful lovers of the province. We may observe that the whole of this pretty story, including the institution of the annual procession, is related of another pair of lovers, who lived and died, according to the romance people, at the same period in Burgundy, being such a coincidence—or, rather, series of coincidences, as reality has never witnessed.

As to the annual processions, there really were such things observed over the south of France, and in many places to the north, all through the Middle Ages; but nowhere else than in Roussillon was it pretended that they owed their origin to the catastrophe of a pair of lovers, aided by the decree of an appreciative monarch. Within the limits of the Langue d'Oc, and in many of the countries bordering thereon, there were fraternities of gay ladies and gentlemen who called themselves Valentines. Every year, on the 14th of February, these Valentines assembled on horseback in some convenient place, usually the centre of the nearest town. Here they formed files, each consisting of a lady and a gentleman; and hence they departed to make the circuit of the neighbourhood. They were led by two files got up to represent Cupid, Mercy, Loyalty, and Chastity, and they were duly attended by trumpeters and banner-bearers, to say nothing of the inevitable rabble. The procession closed at the Hotel de Ville, whose principal apartment was gaily decorated for the occasion. Here the Valentines worshipped Love, in a

neat parody on the Mass. Then each pair kissed and parted, for a new engagement was about to be formed. There was now produced a silver casket, containing the names of all the gentlemen present written on separate slips of parchment. One by one, each of the ladies drew a slip, until no more remained in the casket. Afterwards the president, bedizened as Cupid, read out the names written on the slips, and the gentlemen who bore these names became the Valentines of the respective ladies who had drawn them for the ensuing year. When all the Valentines were thus recoupled, the laws of the institution were read over by the president. These specified that each gentleman was to be faithful to his lady for the term of twelve months; to keep her well supplied with flowers, according to the season, and to make her presents at stated periods; to escort her whithersoever she wished to go for purposes of piety or pleasure; to make her songs, if a poet, and to break lances in her honour, if skilled in arms; and to resent to the utmost every insult levelled at her. The laws further specified that, should the gentleman happen to be convicted of wilful failure in any item, he was to be expelled with ignominy from the society. In this case the Valentines were to assemble, as on the 14th of February, and march to his house. In front thereof his crime and sentence were to be proclaimed, and a bundle of straw was to be burned on his door-sill, in token of his excommunication. Finally, the marriage of a pair of Valentines was strictly prohibited, under the like penalty. The president having finished his recitation of the statutes, another parody of the Church services of the day was perpetrated, and the party broke up. These singular fraternities, some of which survived to the commencement of the sixteenth century, certainly

owed their origin to the species of gallantry taught and practised by the troubadours, and with them, therefore, we shall close our notice of the MEDIÆVAL CAVALIER SERVENTE.

*Note.*—It is stated in the text, that some of the fraternities of Valentine were in existence early in the sixteenth century. We mean in something like their ancient vigour. In the seventeenth century, and even in the eighteenth, it was still usual to form groups of Valentines on the 14th of February. But these were no more than what may be termed supper-table groups, and engaged the parties to nothing beyond an exchange of pretty trifles.—*See Pepys and other Diarists.*

# WANDERING TROUBADOURS

THE troubadours formed two widely different classes. There were those who sang by inclination and those who sang by profession. Among the former were great princes like Cœur de Lion and Alfonso el Sabio; and great barons like the Counts of Poitou, Provence, and Toulouse; and an infinite number of lesser but still powerful chatelains, like Savari de Mauleon and Bertrand Von Born. The professional troubadours were of various orders. Some were of noble, others of very plebeian birth; some were vagabond and others stationary, the latter being chiefly those who, wearying of a wandering life, had taken service with the wealthier barons.

The profession of the troubadour was probably the best remunerated of the age and country. Money, clothes, jewels, arms, horses, and unlimited hospitality were the more usual rewards of the skilled in "the gay science." But exceptional merit was always paid at a higher rate. We find Aubert of Pucibot and Rambaud of Vaquieras winning knighthood, and Guilhem Boyer, Arnaud of Cotignac, Gauceln of Mostiere, and others, gaining comfortable governments through their superiority in song. In the course of this chapter we shall have occasion to notice several instances of wandering bards realizing much wealth. There is even one instance

on record wherein a large estate was given for a single composition. Taraudet of Flassans purchased the estate, the name of which he bore, from Folquet of Ponteves for a piece entitled—"Lous Ensegnamens per se garder contra las Traysons d' Amor"—Instructions to guard against the treacheries of love. Concerning this piece, it has been remarked by the Monk of the Golden Isle, that the instructions it contained could not have been of much value, since vendor and purchaser were alike and egregiously deceived of their mistresses.

Old Provençal poetry abounds in allusions to the munificence of patrons and the good fortune of poets. Perhaps, the care with which it is evident that the latter laboured to inculcate generosity towards themselves did something to produce the desired result. And even more effective in this way, must have been the denunciations which the disappointed troubadour never failed to aim at the stinginess of the patron—that is, when the latter happened to be himself unacquainted with the art of stringing rhymes. Otherwise the satirist got as good as he gave, and the edge was thus taken off his diatribe. So it happened with Hughes of St. Cyr, at least once in the course of his varied peregrinations. He paid a visit to the Count of Rhodez, a baron whose munificence he had fomerly experienced, and was received with somewhat less warmth and liberality than he conceived to be fairly his due. Thereupon, he retired in high dudgeon to a neighbouring chateau, where he composed the following delectable lay—despatching it, of course, to the count the moment he could find a suitable messenger. The said messenger, it may be observed, was in this, as in all similar instances, a singer of the lowest class, who communicated the lay by singing it before the subject:—

Don't be afraid my mettlesome blade
Nor raise your eyebrows nor straighten your leg—
I assure you I have not come to beg.
Of this world's goods I have all I need—
As for yourself—if you're short of pelf—
  For so it may be
That times have changed with you as with me—
  I do not object my pockets to rifle
  In order to hand your countship a trifle ;
I verily think it would be a good deed !

To this piece of cool impudence the count, who was also a poet, replied, and at once, by the same messenger :—

You wretched scamp ! You inveterate tramp !
Do you indeed forget, or no,
Entering my castle some years ago
Naked without and empty within—
A very scare crow ragged and thin ?
To fatten you up and set you to rights
Cost me more than the board of a couple of knights,
Including their tail of archers and squires--
And now—by the souls of all my sires !—
  Those who hear I know will believe—
You inveterate screw ! You more than Jew !
  If I were to offer a palfrey or two,
By jingo, you're just the sneak to receive !

The count was not satisfied with this elegant retort, but summoned his neighbour to expel Hughes forthwith. This the neighbour refused in a biting song, in whose composition the vagabond probably had a share. The affair culminated in one of those endless feuds so common in the good old times.

It must be admitted that the life of the wandering troubadour possessed peculiar attractions for people of erratic temperament. They were allowed all the privileges, and more than all the licence of the pilgrim and the strolling friar ; they were free to come and go where

ever they liked; a cast of their art paid every bill, and they were always much more welcome than any other class of itinerant. During the winter months they remained at home, composing new pieces. With the spring they resumed their peregrinations, and thence to the unloosing of the colder blasts and the retreat of vegetation before them, they were in their glory. The poorer members of the profession travelled alone and afoot, with staves in their hands and wallets on their backs. They sang chiefly for the amusement of the lower classes in town and country, delighting especially to entertain the frequenters of the hostelries. Their admission to the castle was mostly surreptitious and accomplished for the gratification of the menials. Sometimes a message, such as that sent by Hughes of St. Cyr, procured them the favour of an interview with the baron himself. And sometimes the baronial family was compelled to resort to the poor-devil minstrel, in dearth of all other sources of amusement, for the dissipation of its *ennui*. This was the opportunity of the musical vagabond, and then, of course, he exerted himself to the utmost. If he possessed any original talent it was certain to be recognized and rewarded in the substantial manner we have mentioned. Besides, he sprang at once to note; for the first high-class discoverer of genius was sure to take credit to himself, and to trumpet its praises in all directions. Nor would the said discoverer of genius allow the possessor of the valued quality to depart without supplying him with introductions to his neighbours. The last would vie with each other in their liberality to the poet; so that, after experiencing the hospitality of three or four such entertainers, he would find himself enabled to take rank with the more gentlemanly professors of his craft. Thereafter his journeys would be

made on horseback, with sumter mule and page, and in many cases attended by subordinate singers and buffoons —for many of the higher-placed troubadours anticipated the Richardsons, and other directors of companies of strolling players in the last century. With ordinary prudence, the troubadour's fortune was now secure. He might continue his career until he had gathered a competence. He might attach himself to a wealthy baron as social companion and general adviser, obtaining in return the run of the castle, and a knight's holding or two besides. And if attractive in person, he might become the cavalier servente of some wealthy widow, or domineering wife.

The life of the wandering troubadour had its shadows as well as its lights. One of the chief attractions of his lyrics was their personality. When he could throw a current scandal into a song, or when he could describe a disagreeable character therein to the life, the poem was assured of unusual success. But the poet was also assured of more than ordinary peril. Those were rough and ready times, and the persons censured generally avenged themselves with more or less severity on the censor. They would waylay him to administer chastisement, sometimes by a savage whipping, sometimes by slitting or cutting out his tongue, and sometimes by slaying him outright. The professional troubadour was also the butt of all the practical jokers among the higher classes. Ladies and gentlemen delighted to raise a laugh at his expense, nor were they very scrupulous as to the means. Indeed, in their desire to befool the poets, not a few of the jokers, especially among the dames, succeeded very effectually in damning their own reputations to all time —as, for instance, the Lady of Albisso, some notice of whose pranks will be found in the present chapter, and

the Lady Lombes, one of whose freaks is told in our sketch of Raymond of Miravals. Sometimes a baron would suspect—or pretend to suspect—that the troubadours was not what he asserted to be, but a spy or gallant in disguise; and then the object of suspicion had to prove his right to the title under which he had announced himself by composing, on the spot and generally in unpleasant circumstances, a song concerning whose originality there could be no doubt. Then, as will be seen in our notice of the cavalier servente, the poet who lived by his verses ran much risk from the jealous husbands and irate relatives of giddy dames. And occasionally they fell among thieves, from whom they did not always escape so neatly as Peyre of Chateauneuf—of whom Nostradamus romanceth as follows:—"an author worthy of credit, whom he of San Cæsar affirms that he has seen and read, states that this poet, while returning from Rochemartin, whither he had been to visit the lord of the place, having reached the wood of Vallon* was there captured by some thieves who haunted the place—robbing and murdering the passengers. Having possessed themselves of his horse, money, etc., the thieves stripped him even to his shirt and were just going to kill him. But the victim entreated to be allowed, before he died, to sing one of his songs. Obtaining his request, Peyre of Chateauneuf (in his shirt be it remembered and under the shadow of the sombre woods, with the truculent scoundrels around him) began to improvise so sweetly, in praise of thieves and thievery in general, and of the thieves of Vallon in particular, that, for the great delight they felt in his song, these rogues returned him

* The woods and caves in the neighbourhood of Vallon, in the Ardèche, were well adapted for the proceedings of banditti; they were used with some effect by the Camisards in the days of Louis XIV.

his horse, his money, and every thing they had taken from him." Though hardly believing the legend ourselves, we are bound to admit that such a thing was not utterly impossible among the impulsive children of the south, where, if any where, "music hath charms to tame the savage." To say nothing of the older stories of Amphion, Orpheus, and Arion, which are merely exaggeration of actual occurrences, there is an adventure, not unlike that attributed to Peyre of Chateauneuf, related of Ariosto.

All things considered, it was but natural that the profession should become, as it really did, the alternative of those who failed in other pursuits. Elias Carel, for instance, had been a jeweller and heraldic engraver before he took up the lute; Elias of Bariols, a bankrupt merchant; Peter of St. Remy, a ruined spendthrift; a host, runaway monks, and quite as many, unsuccessful soldiers. To one of the latter, Raymond of Miravals addressed some instructions, in which the character and qualifications of such aspirants to lyrical honours are well hit off. "Friend Forniers," says Raymond, "I understand that you wish to be instructed by me in the gentle art of the troubadour. In the first place, you ought to thank God, who has put it into your head to abandon the trade of soldier. Then, you must know that you have to learn the manners and customs that obtain among respectable people. It requires one man to handle the sword and the bow, and another to touch the strings of the lyre. When you carried the former, it was quite in character to rob, plunder, and do violence, and, as I have heard of you, to strip the houses, fields, and granaries of monks and hospitalers in preference to those of other people. But against such practices you must now make a firm resolve. You may think it very hard to be

debarred of your innocent pastimes, but I assure you, my dear Forniers, that troubadours only make love in a legitimate way, and seldom or never allow their cudgels to make acquaintance with the backs of the clergy. Then, you will have to get rid of some other vices peculiar to soldiers. Bethink you, for instance, how terribly you swear when you happen to lose your last coin at the gaming table; that, my friend, is a trick that society will not tolerate in a troubadour. It is possible that you are capable of making such sacrifices to the propriety imposed by the profession which you desire to adopt; though I greatly doubt it. Should you, however, really succeed in divesting yourself of these and other uncleanly habits of the camp, perhaps you may begin to think of setting up for a singer."

Forniers was the type of a class who looked upon the craft of the troubadour as a method equally easy and agreeable of making a way through the world. There were others, however, who were actuated by very different sentiments, and who entertained the most exalted opinions of the profession and themselves, considering that they had what is now called "a mission," and regarding themselves as the benefactors and regenerators of society. Of this class was Vidal, who has written for the brotherhood, a manual that might be studied with advantage by the members of certain grave callings at the present day. After lamenting the degeneracy of his era, and contrasting it, as is the custom of such moralists, with the exalted virtue of the good old time, Vidal exclaims, "I see but one remedy for all this mischief, and that is the art of the troubadour." Then he enumerates all the qualities which he considered essential, to the singer. He was to be as wise as the serpent and as harmless as the dove; as

pliable as the willow, and as steadfast as the oak. He was to have learning without pedantry, and wit untainted with folly—to possess the keenest insight into character, combined with the tact to mould himself to every disposition—to be amiable without being parasitic, and edifying without becoming tedious; his merriment was to be unalloyed with levity, and his joviality was to be combined with strictest temperance. He was to be an authority on matters of etiquette, and a model in point of dress; he was to be modest without being shy, and prudent without being sordid. In short, he was to possess all the better qualities of every other class, in addition to those that were peculiar to his own.

None of the troubadours, and least of all Vidal, attained to this standard. Nor do those who made an attempt thereat seem to have been much appreciated in their day. Of the majority of the latter, little more than the names and a few high-toned rhapsodies have been transmitted to posterity. The reason perhaps is, because all these, as Amanieu des Escas, Arnaud of Marsans, and William of Agoult were not professional troubadours. Indeed, of the latter, perhaps, the only unquestionably high moral reputation belongs to Giraud of Borniel. He was born of poor parents at St. Gervaise, a small hamlet of the province so prolific of song and songsters—the Limousin. By some means or other he acquired, while yet a child, a passion for learning, which is perhaps the only passion that never yet was baffled. The winters he devoted to study, and the summers he spent in wandering through the land, accompanied by "two excellent musicians," who sang his songs. These songs were highly prized. The Provençals esteemed their author the greatest of all their poets, and termed him the "Master of the Troubadours." But this

opinion has not been shared by such admirers and competent judges of Provençal poetry as Dante and Petrarch. The latter pronounces Arnaud Daniel, who is hardly more than a shadow to us moderns—

> Gran Maestro d'amor, ch'alla sua terra
> Ancor fa onor col dir pulito e bello.*

And the former, while making repeated and honourable mention of Geraud de Borneil in his treatise of Vulgar Eloquence, yet terms the lofty value attached to his works by his countrymen mere folly, and agrees with Petrarch in assigning superiority over all the troubadours to Arnaud Daniel.

> Far miglior fabbro del parlar materno :
> Versi d'amore, e prose di romanzi
> Soverchio tutti : e lascia dir gli stolti
> Che quel de Lemosi credon ch ch' avanzi.

In one respect, however, Geraud fully merited the supremacy that his countrymen accorded him. Nostradamus testifies that "in person he was beyond measure chaste and temperate; and that he was superior in prudence, generosity, and integrity to all the other poets." It is stated that many princes sought to win him to their service by tempting offers, but that, disdaining all subjection and all restraint—including the bonds of matrimony—he continued to the last his peculiar course. Parsimonious to himself, except in matters literary, he divided his gains, which were considerable, between his poor relations and the church of his native place, where he died, at an advanced age, in 117—.

Giraud de Borniel was essentially that personage of whom at one period ourselves used to hear so much—"the schoolmaster abroad." His character, however,

* There is another reading—"novo e bello"—which may be correct, since Arnaud Daniel introduced a new style.

was exceptional. The average wandering troubadour thought more of amusing his audience than of edifying it ; and far from being a moral teacher, he was, in nine cases out of ten, just the reverse. His chief care being to render himself an entertaining companion, he sought to cultivate his conversational powers to the utmost. Of one of them it is said that he was acquainted with the virtues of all the plants, knew how to tell fortunes, and could recite all the best romances of the Round Table and all the best theses of the Universities. By the last must be understood such questions as, how many angels could dance on the point of a needle, or nestle in a sunbeam ; and such arguments as, those attributed to that superlatively honest mind, which attempts to reason impartially on both sides of contested subjects, and which the schoolmen personified by the hungry ass placed between two equally attractive bundles of hay. It is added that this accomplished stroller could repeat, word for word, every one of the stories contained in two celebrated collections of stories—one of which, "The Castoiement," was translated from the Arabic by a Jew (1106), and the other, "The Dolopathes," was compiled by a monk, towards the end of the same century—and that he was besides, remarkable for the neatness of his dress and address, the luxuriance of his ringlets, and the delicacy of his complexion, in which the old gossip includes the hue of his maiden-like fingers. With respect to the recitation of stories learnt by heart, it may be remarked that this was not confined to the troubadours. The thing was commonly practised by all the cultivated minds of mediæval Europe, and would, probably, be still in use but for the invention of printing. "The closing story of your Decameron," writes Petrarch to Boccaccio, "has affected me so much that I have com-

mitted it to memory, in order that I may be able to recite it to my friends."

The wandering troubadour was quite as frequently the singer of the poetry of other men as a poet himself. Poets of acknowledged talent were always beset by vagabonds eager to buy, beg, or steal a new piece. It was not every bard of established fame that condescended to make money in this way, though that some of them did so will be seen in our notice of the career of Gaucelm Faudet, and also in a remark made by Petrarch which we intend to quote presently. It was more usual for the low class tramp to receive his lyrics gratis, but always on condition that he made no alteration therein, that he announced the author's name wherever he made use of it, and that he sang it to a proper tune and under suitable circumstances. The last stipulation was not at all unnecessary. It is said (Sacchetti, cxv.) that Dante was once terribly incensed at finding a group of the lowest class dancing to some verses of his "Inferno," which were being sung by a blacksmith. The bards who distributed their compositions "without money and without price," were not unactuated by selfish motives. There were some who did so with the view of getting others to vent their satires, in districts and before companies where they durst not appear themselves. And we may believe, that the pleasant hope of thus extending their renown, was not absent from the minds of even the most unselfish of those who bestowed their poems by way of alms. Among the many charitable in this way was Raymond de Miravals, who thus addresses the singer, Bayonna: "I see that you are poor and badly clothed; but I mean to extricate you from your misery by giving you a servente, which will be worth money and raiment to

you. At the Court of Narbonne I have known a worse to be repaid with a horse, a saddle of Carcassonne, a lance bearing a pennon, a coat of mail, and a buckler. Here, take it and try your fortune among my neighbours. I do not mention the barons to whom you ought to apply; there are so many of them meritorious that the task would be endless, and where all are superlative there can be no preference and, therefore, no selection. They, be sure, will recompense you well. Go afterwards to Carcassonne. Present yourself to Peyre Rotgier of Cabaretz, and if he does not pay you your fee, I will give you double myself. Then betake you to my friend, Oliver, who will clothe you from head to foot in fine cloth of Carcassonne. Montesquieu will be sure to welcome you, for there is nobody more affable. He will give you a summer suit and a horse fit for the tourney. Next, sing your songs and serventes to Bertrand de Saissac, who will not allow you to depart empty-handed. It is true that he is one of those who would rather keep than give away. Nevertheless, for love of me, he will bestow on you a useful cob. Hasten then to Aymerie of Narbonne, who will complete your good fortune by presenting you with a fine horse and its trappings." In another place Raymond says to this same Bayonna, who seems to have been one of those people whose inveterate tendency to flounder in difficulties renders them so uncomfortable to their friends: "Here is a third servente which I make for you. The others have gained you much gold and silver, to say nothing of second-hand finery and old suits of armour, and this I have no doubt will turn out as productive." There is a passage in one of the letters of Petrarch which deserves to be quoted as a pendant to the above. "There are people of little wit, strong memory, and

consummate impudence who, possessing nothing of their own, pillage the brains and purses of others without compunction. They frequent princely courts where they say and sing the pieces composed by better men, receiving in return presents of all kinds, and clothes as well as cash. To obtain the means of making a livelihood they pester writers of renown, and by dint of entreaties, or of bribes—according to the disposition of him to whom they apply—they generally procure what they want. Formerly I used myself to be much annoyed by these people; but I see little of them now. Perhaps they think that age has extinguished in me the poetic fire; perhaps they conceive that I devote too much time to my new studies to produce any verses; and perhaps they have discovered that I have become harsh and uncharitable. Still it happens now and then, that I am touched by the misery and humility of the suppliants, and waste an hour or two in producing something that may satisfy their wants; nor are they all ungrateful. Occasionally have I seen persons, who have left me naked and miserable, return in good case and well provided with money, to thank me for my services. Pleased with their acknowledgments, I have made up my mind to refuse my aid to none such. But as often as I did this have I been compelled to abandon my purpose by the worry to which it subjected me."

That the literary man of the past should be made the recipient of all the rubbish that encumbered the wardrobes of the wealthy, harmonises but poorly with our ideas of the dignity of the profession. Still the custom, though carried to an extreme in this instance, was not so degrading as it appears. Down to the 17th century the gift of a dress by a superior was considered an honour. Nor did great people confine such dona-

tions to their subordinates. One of the mistresses of Henri Quatre, gave a petticoat to make a canopy for an image of the Virgin, and the magnificent robe was received with due gratitude by the priests of the shrine. The extent of such an honour, indeed, depended on the quality of the material and the condition of the article. If it were of poor stuff or much worn, it was not regarded as in any degree honourable but something else—as appears from various serventes in which poets are taunted with wearing the cast robes of their patrons. Of course, the troubadours did not retain all their presents. Selecting such things as they required, they disposed of the rest—finding a ready sale for the cattle at any of the numerous fairs, and as ready a sale for the "old clothes" in the Jewry of the nearest town—for, as appears from the records of the period, the Jews were even then noted for their dealings in such things.*

The wandering troubadours did not confine themselves to song and recitation. Many of them did their best to carry out the instruction which Giraud Calanson gave as follows:—"Learn to play on the tabor and cymbal, to prepare nine instruments with ten cords, to manipulate the many-stringed fiddle, to strike the harp and the guitar, to blow the flute, and to contrive a dance that shall suit the notes of the bag-pipe. Learn also to throw up and catch little balls on the points of knives, to play tricks with baskets, to imitate the chirrup of birds, and to jump through four hoops." The practice of these juggling and fiddling tricks, along with the character of many of the mere reciters and acrobats, was felt to degrade the profession, and drew occasional

* A troubadour profanely remarked of the tribes, that they showed themselves so rebellious in the wilderness, simply because a certain miracle forbade their garments to decay, and thus suspended a beloved trade.

lamentations to that effect from its worthier members. One of the latter, Giraud Riquier of Narbonne, addressed a petition to Alfonso—or, as the troubadours wrote the name,—Amfos el Sabio, a renowned patron of poetry, in which the monarch was besought to exercise his authority in restoring the "gay science" to its pristine dignity. As a means thereto, Giraud suggested the publication of an edict in which the poets, the singers of poetry, and the buffoons, should be classified apart. Amfos made no attempt to effect the proposed arrangement. Perhaps, he saw that it lay beyond his reach. Nor did any other sovereign accept the task from which he shrank. So long, therefore, as Provence remained the land of song, the name, troubadour, continued to confound the man of original genius and exalted sentiment with the merest stroller.

It must not be supposed that the trobar's craft was to be assumed off-hand. Facility in rhyming, an ear for music, a vein of low humour, a good stock of impudence, and even a capacity for jumping through four hoops, were not the only essentials. Something further was requisite, which was only to be learnt by association with recognized members of the brotherhood. For instance—the poet's stock of imagery was limited, and so were the uses of each particular figure. There was one kind of metre appropriated to the canzon, another to the tenzon, and a third to the servente. Rhyme and cadence, too, had their laws, which could only be infringed by a genius of the highest order. There were also what may be called stage laws. A good song had to be given in an attractive form, in order to render it popular; and, as all great poets are not blessed with sweet voices, the troubadour who was merely a poet, found it necessary—as in the case of Giraud de

Borneil, to consort with pleasing singers. It was also found that monotony did not pay, and, therefore, one after another, declamation, farce, and tumbling were added to the entertainment. The performance of the troubadour thus assumed an essentially dramatic character at an early period, and necessitated the study of grouping and dressing the characters, as well as of the arrangement of the parts. It is to Provence, indeed, that we ought to look for the origin of the modern drama. Ourselves are inclined to think that the mystery plays were in a great measure designed to rival the more profane exhibitions of the troubadours, just as we are inclined to think that the larger number of the monkish legends were intended to supersede the legends of romance in the popular mind. Apart from the technicalities we have specified, there were certain laws of copyright necessary to be understood, as the following anecdote will show. When dying, Aubert of Sisteron, a poet of the cavalier servente order, entrusted his compositions to his comrade, Peyre of Valieres, whom he directed to present them, in his name, to the lady of his love, the Marchioness of Malespina. It was customary for the troubadour, when he found his last hour approaching, to take such a course as this, and the trust was seldom betrayed. Peyre, however, proved a scoundrel, and sold the songs to a wandering troubadour, Fabro of Uzes, who sang them as his own. The deceit was soon detected, for the manner of the real author was peculiar, and several of the songs were already well known. But, so long as Fabro confined his perigrinations to Lombardy and Piedmont, he suffered no ill-consequence. In Provence, which the plagiarist entered next, a different fate awaited him. There the Courts of

Love took cognizance of such offences, and before one of them Fabro was speedily cited. He had no choice but to appear, for every inhabitant of the country was the unpaid but very zealous servant of the tribunal, and such a thing as contempt of court was quite impossible. By some means which is left untold, the attendance of an all-important witness, Peyre of Valieres, was secured at the trial. Fabro was found guilty and sentenced to be whipped—a sentence which was rigorously executed.

It was no less customary than necessary for intending trobars to place themselves under the instruction of properly qualified teachers. In earlier times the disciple followed and waited on the master—pretty much as Elisha devoted himself to Elijah, nor did the one think of setting up for himself until the other had abandoned the road. Thus, a poet, whose real name is forgotten under the sobriquet Cercamons (*cherche monde*—Rambler), which he derived from his irresistible liking for vagabondage and the extent to which he gratified it, was followed by the somewhat better known Marcebrus. This Cercamons is pictured in old manuscripts in the habit of a traveller, that is, afoot, with his tunic tucked up to his belt, and carrying over his shoulder a staff, to the end of which a bundle is slung; about as primitive a mode of getting over a journey as can well be conceived. His scholar was, in his way, a representative man. He was a foundling brought up by Aldric de Villars, a Gascon baron, in whose fields he had been exposed.* Displaying some ability, the baron had him educated with the view of filling one of the many fat benefices at his disposal—a purpose which some interpret as showing that the baron knew more

* By feudal law the lord was bound to provide for children exposed on his lands.

about the foundling and his origin, than he thought it right to disclose. The *protégé*, however, frustrated the intention of the patron by falling in love with the life of a troubadour—just as the hero of one of Father Prout's lyrics fell in love with the life of an itinerant piper—and absconding with Cercamons in his fifteenth year. While playing the part of fag, he bore the name of Pan Perdit, probably in allusion to the comfortable livelihood he had sacrificed. Eventually his name was altered to Marchbrus, or Mark the Severe, because his strength lay in satire. Not less a wanderer than his master, he traversed many lands, extending his rambles as far as Portugal. Everywhere he sang against current vices, being especially bitter on love and lovers. Unfortunately, his censure was not confined to the sin, but dealt just as harshly with the sinner, and, therefore, made him many enemies. Finally, a number of the barons of Guienne, whom he had exasperated by his serventes, united to take vengeance on him; and waylaying him during one of his excursions, put him to death. Marchebrus—who, by the way, must not be confounded with another of the same name, who flourished two hundred years later—was not the only troubadour who suffered thus, and for a like cause.

Another method of acquiring the skill of the troubadour was by frequenting those baronial and princely courts which the members of the fraternity were accustomed to haunt. It was chiefly in this way that men of high birth became adepts in the "gay science." It was in this way, also, that professionals acquired that high-bred tone of language and sentiment, and that perfect knowledge of all the niceties in the theory and practice of love, and in the code of honour, wanting which they were fitted only to amuse the artisan and the peasant.

It was here, too, that the professional received his diploma in the shape of recognition of his talents, and of introductions, frequently couched in rhyme, addressed to other patrons of poesy. These courts, indeed, were, to all intents and purposes, academies of song. It was a common winter-evening amusement for some of the leading personages to propose subjects for discussion in rhyme. Ladies as well as gentlemen, and amateurs as well as professionals, all, indeed—and there were many —who could make a tolerable verse were accustomed to join in these contests; and it was the duty of the president to decide who had done the best therein.

Only inferior to the Palace as a school of Provençal poetry was the convent. The monks of that period were everywhere the leaders of public opinion, because, while carefully identifying themselves with the interests and pursuits of the people, they had the cultivation, wealth, leisure, and position, which qualified them to lead. The Provençal monks, of course, shared the enthusiasm of their countrymen for song, and had facilities for acquiring skill therein denied to most others. Vocal music was then a principal study of ecclesiastics, and it was carried by them to a pitch of perfection from which it declined during the course of the Reformation, and to which it is hardly likely again to attain. Nor were ecclesiastics the only adepts in the science. An enthusiasm therefore pervaded all ranks, from the monarch to the milkmaid. Good King Robert, the music-mad sovereign of France, was not without rivals among his peers. James I. of Scotland could play on eight instruments; and it is stated that from him Scotch melody derives its distinctive character —plaintive sweetness. Music, too, was one of the manias, indulgence in which tended to effect the ruin of his

accomplished but weak successor, James III. Our own Henry V. was also a lover of music. He carried with him to France a magnificent band, which played for an hour, every evening and every morning, before his tent; and at his court he maintained twelve minstrels, each of whom was clothed and lodged, and received besides one hundred shillings, equivalent to nearly as many pounds sterling, yearly. It was proposed to celebrate his return to London, after the victory of Agincourt, by a musical festival, in which children, clad in white surplices, were to line all the streets through which he was to pass, chanting the while a song which is probably that given, with the music, in the first volume of the Pepys' Collection, and which has this refrain: "Deo Gratias: Deo gratias, Anglia, redde pro victoria," at the end of every stanza. Whatever opinion may be formed of the song as a poem, to us it seems perfectly suitable to such an occasion. Unlike other old ballads, it is brief, containing but twenty-four lines, the versification is simple, and the religious sentiments are just those to harmonise with the character of Henry. Perhaps nothing shows more strongly the influence of music in the Middle Ages than the deference manifested by the turbulent Florentines to the blind musician Francesco, who died in 1390, and who, among the countless musicians similarly afflicted, was emphatically distinguished as "Cieco." To him they hastened for advice in political emergencies, regarding his words as something divine. At such seasons the street mob, then the ruling power, clamoured to know what Cieco said, nor would they listen to any of their favourite orators, until the utterances of the oracle had been divulged. Fortunately for them, Cieco was an enthusiast, and, therefore, not the man to imitate the

priestess of Apollo in matters touching Philip. Music being thus dear to the laity, it was of necessity doubly dear to the clergy. It formed the most striking and attractive part in the rites of the Church; and, as we have already remarked, it was carried by Churchmen to the highest perfection. This will be evident to those who consult the works of the English composers, who were educated under the old system, and who flourished during the decline of Church music, in the reigns of Elizabeth and James. A competent judge, Dr. Burney, declares some of these pieces to be so difficult, that it would be next to impossible to find a master in England who could play one of them, after a month's practice. Every cathedral and every monastery had its "song school," in many cases presided over by men of high and varied accomplishments. These teachers were always on the look-out for promising pupils, and so were the brothers of the convent, for a single surpassing voice often made the fortune of a shrine. And as the choirs were always in request by the promoters of civic and other feasts, we may fairly conclude that their teachers did not limit their lectures to sacred music.

It is certain that the ranks of the troubadours were largely recruited from the cloisters; and it is equally certain that these runaway monks were among the most skilful and successful of the craft. As we have already noticed several of these worthies, and the motives that induced them to throw off the cowl, in our chapter on the cavalier servente, we shall limit our illustrations for the present to the following:—"Louis Lascaris," writes Nostradamas, "was of the noble and ancient house of Lascaris, Counts of Tende, Ventigmiglia, and other places. He was a person so illustrious and of such renown, that the said lands—as writes the monk of the

Golden Isle—glorified greatly in him as a most famous and excellent poet." Having made this offering to the vanity of the living members of the house of Lascaris, Nostradamus continues in a like eulogistic vein:—"He was of such a happy wit, not only in the poetical Provençal, but also in the vulgar dialects, that nobody could equal his sweetness, or his invention. While yet a youth he took holy orders in a monastery. But afterwards, falling in love with a lady of the neighbourhood, the sister of the great Isnard of Glandeves, he married her and had five children." Here we are bound to observe that our authority is provokingly succinct. He should have told us how a troubadour came to perpetrate such a solecism as marrying the lady of his love, and he should have stated how the marriage of his sister with a vagabond monk, which really was no marriage at all, could have satisfied the scruples of the great Isnard of Glandeves. Besides, he leaves a great blank in the life of the poet, saying nothing whatever of his adventures during an interval that must have been remarkably eventful and, therefore, interesting, since the next sentence shows him as a military chief of high renown—a position that could not have been attained easily or expeditiously. "At this period the Queen Giovanna, having a powerful army in Provence for the expulsion of the Free Companies, gave the command thereof to Lascaris, who was valiant and skilled in war. At the end of the campaign the envy and malice of his ill-wishers caused him to be persecuted by Pope Urban V., who desired that he should return to his convent. But he, who would have chosen death in preference, and who saw that the Pope was every day becoming more and more exasperated against him, went with a fine equipage to the court of the Queen

Giovanna, whose protection he claimed. Queen Giovanna duly considered the services that the poet had rendered, and those that he might yet render her crown." Then Nostradamus adds two or three lines which hit off the characters of the Queen, of the Papacy as it then was, and of the age, to a nicety. "Seeing besides that he was a gentleman of handsome person and gay and generous disposition, she wrote so earnestly in his favour to the Pope at Avignon, that his Holiness consented to fix a period of twenty-five years, at the end of which the poet was to return to his cell. This grace was confirmed by Gregory IX., the successor of Urban, but the poet expired before the period." We are bound to add that the Provençal historians differ with Nostradamus in one particular, which as they give it, increases the piquancy of the story. They deny that Lascaris was ever any thing more than the gallant of the sister of the great Isnard of Glandeves.

As curious in its way is the story of another runaway monk, Aubert of Pucibot. "While yet a boy," says Nostradamus, "he was placed in a convent by his father, a gentleman of Limousin. There he applied himself to good letters and to music, learning to play on all sorts of wind and stringed instruments. Being, besides, a good inventor, he became an excellent Provençal poet" —while he remained in the convent, be it remembered. "There was a lady, *his friend*, who visited him *very often* at the convent, under the pretence of devotion." It is probable that this female friend fell in love with Aubert's delicious voice in the first instance. As to the rest of her conduct, we beg to assure our readers that, if the satirists* are to be trusted,

* Poesies de Coquilart, Mathiolus Bajaiaus, etc.

it was not unusual for the dames of the middle ages to have monkish gallants and to visit them "at the convent under the pretence of devotion." To Aubert "this dame intimated that it was a sin and a shame for him to waste his best years in such a prison, and that it would be much better to wander the wide world over, than to continue vegetating idly in the cloister." The lady, of course, was not quite disinterested in her counsel. The event, however, must have caused her some disappointment. "Following her advice, Aubert quitted the convent, and hastened to Savari de Mauleon, who was the common resort of all the knowing ones, because he loved and esteemed them, and besides making them fine and valuable presents, caused their poetry to be appreciated and valued by the highest personages of Provence. Here Aubert soon fell in love with a beautiful and virtuous damsel of the house of Barras. Her name was Barrassa, and in praise of her he made many choice songs. But she declared that she would never respond to his affections until he should succeed in getting himself dubbed a knight, adding that when he had raised himself to the specified dignity, she was quite willing to marry him. Wherefore Aubert, who was burning with love, had recourse to the generous Savari, and the latter not only gave him the honouring stroke, but added to that gift an estate to enable the new-made cavalier to support his position. Then Aubert espoused the said damsel and dwelt with her, until Savari, being commissioned to undertake an embassy into Spain, summoned the poet to attend him. Aubert hastened to follow his benefactor, and during his absence Barrassa dwelt all alone in the house. Here she was so assiduously courted by an English cavalier, that he persuaded her at length to quit her home and follow him

to Arles. And at Arles this very unworthy specimen of island chivalry abandoned his frail companion, without so much as bidding her good-bye. Meanwhile, Aubert returned from Spain, and on his way home he halted at Arles, lodging, as it happened, next door to the house in which his wife dwelt. He recognized her immediately, and obtaining an interview with her, ascertained without being recognised, that she was leading an immoral life. The next morning he compelled her to accompany him to Avignon, where he shut her up in a convent. He himself took the thing so much to heart that he disposed of all he possessed, and adopted a religious life; nor could all the entreaties of the many persons of high rank who took pleasure in his poetry, induce him to compose another line." There is a variation of the conclusion of this story, not forgotten by Nostradamus, in which it is said that the poet led his wife from Arles either to the "Avenc of Crues," a profound abyss in the department of the Ardéche, not far from Armentier, into which it was anciently the custom to throw women convicted of adultery; or to the Cape of Armentare, on the Tuscan coast, a headland, which seems to have been used in the Middle Ages somewhat as Leucadia was used in older times, and which is described as a terrible precipice, lofty and abrupt, over against the Island of Hieres. Some say that Aubert really slew his wife at one or other of these places, whilst others assert that, "more cunning than he, she softened him so much with fine words that he contented himself with shutting her up in a monastery." This romantic and uncertain version of the story seems to have been founded, partly on the ancient custom to which it refers, and partly on an erroneous rendering by an Italian writer, of a passage in the original Provençal narrative. Bastero points out

that in the line—*e mena la en una mongia on la fes rendre*, the word *mongia*, which means monastery, has been translated mountain, and the whole line turned into "he conducted her to the precipice, where he slew her," instead of the true reading, "he conducted her to the convent, where he confined her." It is a neat, and by no means an exaggerated specimen of the consequences that may follow the misconception of a single word, by a daring translator.

All the monks who turned troubadours were not runaways. Many of them were commissioned by their superiors to traverse the country in this character, because it was found that the heretical missionaries—who were then so numerous and active in Southern France and in Northern Italy—also made a great and formidable use of song and of the liking of the people therefor. These heretics pretended to be troubadours, not only because they thus obtained an excellent disguise, but because the profession aided them in procuring an introduction to strangers, in preparing an audience to receive unaccustomed doctrines, and in dealing heavy strokes at orthodoxy. The latter did not disdain to learn from its antagonists, nor to meet them with their own weapons. This, however, is a portion of our subject which we have already discussed in our chapter on Provençal poetry.

There remains to be noticed but one other method of acquiring skill in the art of the troubadour. A time came when "professors of poetry" found it profitable to locate themselves in the chief Provençal cities. A celebrated jongleur, Peyre Cardinale, settled thus at Tarascon, towards the close of the thirteenth century. He found abundant occupation and gave such great satisfaction that the commune took him into its service, and

assigned him a large stipend out of the public revenues. Robert, Duke of Calabria, visiting that quarter shortly afterwards, was so much pleased with the conduct of the men of Tarascon and their professor that, in the name his father, who was Count of Provence as well as King of Naples, he confirmed all the privileges of the city, and exempted it, besides, from taxation of every kind for the next ten years, on one single condition—that the professorship should be maintained. It should be added that Peyre Cardinale was a man of exceptionally high character and consummate ability, who afterwards attained high rank as a diplomatist in the service of the Neapolitan monarch. Another of these professors was Bertrand of Pezers, who, as Nostradamus informs us, "for a long time kept a public school of Provençal poetry." Among his pupils was a young lady of noble family, who was surpassingly beautiful, and who "sang like an angel." Bertrand taught this attractive being to make verses; nor was this the sum of his instructions. The professor, as well as the pupil, was young and handsome; so he fell in love with her, and she fell in love with him. "There is nothing so contagious as love," remarks a sapient old writer, "that is, if one who is infected therewith be brought in contact with another of the opposite sex." The end of the matter was precisely such an event as is commemorated in the old Scotch ballad of "The Gaberlunzie Man." Thenceforth the professor's occupation was at an end. Neither himself nor his wife had anything to expect from the infuriated relatives—who would not have been quite so furious had he merely made her his mistress—except the insertion of six inches of steel under the fifth rib, or a dip in the nearest stream. So, partly to avoid such a catastrophe, and partly to procure a subsistence, the pair became

wandering troubadours, a career in which unusual success attended them. Their story was soon widely known, exciting a good deal of sympathy for them, and a good deal of curiosity concerning them. Thus, wherever they went, they were sure of a favourable reception, an advantage of which they took care to make the utmost. Previous to entering a chateau, they were accustomed to make minute inquiries respecting the inhabitants. "Then," writes our authority, "and with wonderful quickness, they would compose a song ornamented with the memorable deeds—in love, war, and the chase—of the chatelain and his progenitors." It need hardly be added that they were always richly rewarded. On one occasion, however, they were guilty of a small error of judgment. It happened when Giovanna I. of Naples and her newly-wedded second husband, Louis of Taranto, were compelled to take refuge at Avignon from the vengeance of the Hungarian monarch. Being the last representative of their ancient counts, Giovanna was exceedingly dear to the Provençals, and her court was speedily thronged with all that was noble among them. Nor with such only. The brilliant scene was the resort of all who lived by their wits, and thither, with the rest of their tribe, hied Bertrand and his wife. The couple soon secured a royal hearing; but, to the astonishment of queen, consort, and courtiers, the entertainment opened with an elegy, in which Andrea of Hungary, the first and murdered spouse of Giovanna, was credited with every possible virtue. A curious jumble of Christian saints and heathen deities was employed to tear him from the arms of the fond Giovanna, just to prove her patience. And then the same choice band was made to present her with a better husband in the person of Louis of Taranto, as the meet reward of her angelic

resignation. The piece closed with a "joyous epithalamium" on the recent wedding. Then came the reward of the singers. Among other rich gifts the poetess received "a gown of velvet cramosie" from the queen, and the poet a silken mantle from the king. This was for the epithalamium. The singers were then led to the kitchen, where they were heartily fustigated by the master-cook—as a small return for their elegy.

It was not unusual for pairs resembling Bertrand of Pezers and his wife in all respects—except occasionally the trifle marriage—to wanderas troubadours. So wandered those "comeres," as they delighted to term themselves, the noble Raymond Ferraud, and the equally noble Alète de Mauleon, lady of Courbon. Ferraud, the Admirable Crichton of his day, was warrior, mathematician, engineer, musician, and architect, as well as poet. After dazzling the court of good King Robert for half a generation, he turned vagabond along with Dame Alete, who was one of the presidents of the Court of Love held in the Castle of Romanini. For several years the lovers led a joyous life, and met with boundless success. At length came the period of cooling blood and evaporating passion—that period to which sensual indulgence contributes nothing but repulsive memories, and which is called Repentance. Both repented bitterly, and took a course not difficult to anticipate. It was not without a touch of poetry. Burning every copy of their amorous songs, and retiring to the Gulf of Cannes, the one became a nun in the convent of St. Marguerite, which stood on the more southern of the twin islets of Lerins, and the other became a monk in the Monastery of St. Honoret, which stood south of the narrow strait on the other islet. Thus effectually sundered, though

almost within earshot, they spent the remainder of their lives.

In the case of Guilhems de la Tor, who flourished during the war of the Sicilian Vespers, such companionship had another termination. Traversing Lombardy, he visited Milan, where he fell in love with the wife of a barber. The lowly dame proved as frail as the high-born lady of Courbon, and abandoning husband and home, she marched away with the troubadour. All went well with the pair for a few months. At Como, however, the barber's wife fell a victim to one of those visitations of pestilence so frequent in the middle ages. Her lover, as infatuated as Raphael with his Fornarina, could not believe in her death. "She is merely feigning, the better to obtain an opportunity for abandoning me," he would remark to those around him. The people of Como having buried the body, in spite of his resistance, Guilhems took post upon the grave. There he remained continually for ten days and as many nights. "Every night," writes an unknown, "he opened the grave and took out the body of his mistress. Keeping it fixedly in view, he would spend the hours of darkness beseeching her to speak to him; to say whether she were alive or dead; to return to him if she were living, and, if she were indeed dead, to signify what pain she suffered, that he might know how many masses there were to be said, and how much alms there was to be distributed, in order to procure her relief. Then, at break of day, he would replace the body in the grave and cover it up. When the singular story was known through the place, the people assembled, and, tearing Guilhems from the scene of his watch, thrust him from their city. Thenceforth he wandered incessantly over the face of the earth, seeking through many countries for the means of restoring

his beautiful mistress to life. At length a mocker pretended to supply him with what he desired so earnestly. "If you recite the Psalms, fifty Paternosters, and as many Aves, and if you feed seven mendicants every morning for a whole year, without breaking your fast, quenching your thirst, or speaking a word, the woman you love will be restored to you," said the mocker. Guilhems followed his advice in every particular, keeping an exact account the while, of the progress of time. But when the year was out, and he found that he had been cheated, he died of the disappointment.

Perhaps the most remarkable of these couples was Gancelm Faudit and Guglielma Monia. The father of the former was a wealthy plebeian of Uzerche, an ancient commune of the department of the Correze. During the latter portion of his life the old merchant held the post of Papal Agent at Avignon. Nurtured in one of the principal centres of song, the elder Faudit was, like countless others of his day, an amateur troubadour. His son inherited his tastes as well as his estates. When the old man died, and Gancelm found himself independent, he abandoned business to frequent the Provençal courts as a troubadour of the higher order. With all his wealth and ability, our plebeian could not gain admission to the inner and more select portion of the aristocratic circle. He hung about its edge, consorting with the equivocal people who tenanted that uncertain district. Among them he became a gambler, a winebibber, a glutton, and a free liver in every sense of the word. Like his knightly compeers, he aspired to become the cavaliér servénte of some high-born dame; and being ambitious, he made choice of the reigning beauty of Auvergne and the Limousin, Mary of Ven-

tadour. This lady incited Faudit to take the cross, probably to get rid of him in a quiet way; and he still playing the dashing cavalier, accordingly took the cross. Wasting the remnant of his fortune in providing men, horses, and harness, he sailed for Palestine. The East he found not at all to his liking. Besides, the King of England had just concluded his truce with Saladin. So he hastened to return to France, where he stept ashore penniless, a circumstance that at once put an end to his aping of chivalry. Being unfit for anything else, he now became a professional jongleur. In that character he took service with Cœur de Lion, whose acquaintance he seems to have formed during his trip to the Levant, and with this monarch he remained until the catastrophe before Chalus. Deprived by it of his patron, Gancelm had no alternative but to take to the road, like so many of his brother rhymers. A wretched singer, though a good poet, he had but small success at the outset. At length, in a convent at Aix, he met with a damsel of noble birth, Guglielma Monia of Soliers. She was pretty, learned, and sang deliciously. Probably she employed the troubadour to teach her to rhyme—no uncommon thing with ladies in those days. Be that as it may, the gay Faudit enticed her from the convent "with his fine words," and thenceforward, for many a day, she was the companion of his wanderings, rendering his compositions with a grace and a spirit that soon raised them to popularity. Faudit did not limit his entertainment to these songs. "He composed tragedies and comedies," and collecting a company of actors, exhibited his pieces at so much a head. The mention of "tragedies and comedies" at a period so early is rather startling. Cresambini, indeed, after due consideration, pronounces the pieces so named to have been "mere

farces, satirical compositions full of laughter, and, so to say, having neither head nor tail." But, even as such, they must have had a dramatic form. Besides, Nostradamus, who wrote on good authority, mentions Faudit as arranging the scenes, distributing the parts, and performing the other duties of a manager, not forgetting the important one of receiving the money. And, further, we know that several of his contemporaries played similar pieces in precisely the same way. In this instance the "tragedies and comedies" proved remarkably successful, and filled the pockets of the contriver in more ways than one. Besides exhibiting them himself, he sold them to other troubadours "at from two to three thousand livres and even more apiece." In the course of his wanderings Gancelm abandoned none of his vices. He seems, indeed, to have acquired a mastery over the dice-box that rendered it harmless; but he could not prevent certain other propensities from producing their due effect. The result was that himself, and his wife too, for she followed his example—became "corpulent beyond measure." Wearying of the road, especially as he had accumulated a handsome fortune, Gancelm settled down at length in the neighbourhood of Uzerche, to lead the life of a petty châtelain. Here he resumed the ambition of his earlier years, to become the chosen knight of some lady of high rank. But though he sang and paid court, and, as one of his biographers remarks, "made a perfect ass of himself every morning of his life," he gained not the slightest success. One after another he besieged the hearts of the neighbouring dames, and from siege after siege he was repulsed with ignominy—in such style, indeed, as to render him the butt of all the builders of serventes in Provence. But, irrepressible as the Bruce himself, he rose undismayed

from every fresh defeat to make another effort. Having told, in another place, how he was foiled by Mary of Ventadour, who, if identical with his former flame, must by this time have become tolerably mature, we shall content ourselves for the present, with relating his signal discomfiture by Maria Garrida, wife of Raymond, Lord of Albisso. This dame was a high-spirited beauty, who held precisely such notions concerning some of the proprieties as Madame de Motteville attributes to a lady notorious during the wars of the Fronde, the Duchess of Mombason. She was vain withal, and happening, when Gancelm turned his aspirations in her direction, to be greatly in want of a rhymer to sing her manifold perfections, she smiled upon him and gave him hope of shortly obtaining "merci"—a word pregnant with meaning in the mouth of a Provençal beauty. She even allowed him "to kiss her neck below the kerchief," which was a well-known earnest of greater favours to come. At this stage of his suit Gancelm was called to a distance for some days; and no sooner was he well out of the way, than the frolicksome Maria Garrida despatched a trusty messenger to her favoured lover for the time being, who was no less a personage than Uc le Brun, afterwards the Count de la Marche—he whose intended bride King John took to himself—and at this time about the gayest gallant of all the Langue d'Oc. The purport of the message we shall soon see. Immediately after the departure of the messenger, the lady was seized with a qualm of conscience. She remembered, or thought she remembered, that at a former period, exact time unknown, she had vowed to go on a pilgrimage to the shrine of our Lady of Rochmaure, and she determined to fulfil her vow at once. Such a pilgrimage could not but form a pleasant excursion; for the route lay

through the finest and most varied scenery in France, and terminated on the shores of the Rhone, in a spot of the wildest beauty. It is a nook on the right bank of this rapid island-studded river, walled in by fantastic cliffs, every peak of which is capped with a ruin of romantic appearance and history. Of course a pilgrim is not forbidden to enjoy the beautiful prospects which expand at times before him—that is if his shirt ungarnished with prickles, and his shoes unlined with raw peas, will allow him to enjoy them. Nor was the dame of Albisso just the person to torture her delicate body by any such ascetic devices, even on a pilgrimage. Being of highly cultivated mind, and an enthusiastic admirer of the beautiful, she was eminently fitted to appreciate the attractions of the way, had not her attention been completely absorbed by something else. At the end of the first stage of her pilgrimage lay Uzerche, and there the lady elected to take shelter for the night in the house of her devoted admirer, Gancelm. The wife of the latter made her very welcome, appropriating to her use the bedroom of the absent troubadour. And "there," says the naughty story-teller, "the lady found Uc concealed, a thing that pleased her mightily. And she remained in the house with him two whole days. Then she continued her pilgrimage to Rochemaure, whither Uc attended her." The narrative contains several other lines remarkably illustrative of the manners of the period. They are, however, lines which we should as soon think of turning into English as one of the discourses of that model Churchman, Brother Jean des Entommeures. Hardly had the pair quitted his house than Gancelm returned, and his wife hastened to relate all that had passed, without sparing him a single detail. He was hugely disgusted, especially with

the impudence that had made choice of such a place of assignation. And well he might be; for, as more than one example shows, when the gay ladies of Provence desired to show supreme contempt towards a wooer, they invariably contrived to meet his successful rival in precisely such a place as Maria Garrida met Uc le Brun, and as invariably adopted measures to give the matter wide publicity. Gancelm took characteristic revenge. He made a bitter song on the offenders; his last, as it proved, for he died shortly afterwards.

Faudit's method of repairing a shattered fortune was one commonly adopted by gentlemen in difficulties. Hughes of Lobieres, a knight of Tarascon, finding himself penniless, but a thorough master of the art of composing cobbole, canzon, servente, and tenzon, became a wandering troubadour. His birth procured him admission to the highest circles, and his talents—for he was one of the ablest men of the era—did the rest. In a very few years he was enabled, not only to retire, but to assume the state of a great baron. Here he displayed wickedness fully on a par with his ability. He gratified his passions to the utmost, and perpetrated crimes of every hue, and, to a great extent, with impunity; for he was as skilful in the execution of his misdeeds as he was daring in their conception, being one of those monsters divest of pity, love, and fear which Shakespeare has typified in Richard III.—one of those being composed exclusively of appetite and intellect, who are in one direction too much above, and in another direction too much below, their kind to feel with it or for it. In a few years he became the terror and detestation of every class. At last the country could bear with him no longer, and roused against him in arms, as against

one of those fearful beasts of which old legends tell. Hughes, however, was not to be taken in the toils. Finding resistance hopeless, and escape impossible, he committed suicide, but so artfully that even this last crime could not be proved. Thus he secured his carcass against torture in life and contumely in death, and to this extent triumphed over his foes. Time the Avenger, however, has taken full vengeance on Hughes of Lobieres. His songs and his good deeds—if such he ever performed—are consigned to oblivion, and nothing but the memory of his iniquity survives.

More worthy of success were the three brothers, Guy Eble, and Peyre, and their cousin, Elias of Uzes. These were kinsmen of knightly race, who found their inheritance too small to afford them a decent maintenance. It happened that while Guy was skilful in composing canzons, and Eble as skilful in composing serventes, Peyre was a good musician, and Elias an excellent comedian. Putting their heads together, they concluded that "it was better to improve their position by uniting their talents and visiting the various courts, than to remain at home to die of hunger." Accordingly they formed a partnership, in which Peyre was to do the music and Elias the tumbling, while Eble was to make himself generally useful, and Guy was to receive the money and divide it equally among them. Starting from Uzes, in the costume of Cercamons, they trudged afoot to the castle of the nearest of the great barons, who happened to be that same Lord of Albisso, with whose self-willed wife we have already formed some acquaintance. The baron was exceedingly liberal to good poets and so were his numerous guests; and both lord and guests were compelled to admit that better poets than these were seldom to be met with. Consequently the cousins

quitted the castle to continue the campaign, not only well mounted and supplied with necessaries, but carrying with them testimonials certain to procure them a ready hearing elsewhere. Nor were they less fortunate in their subsequent calls. Being prudent withal, they soon amassed a competence, which might have been larger but for one small circumstance, Eble's serventes formed the chief attraction of the troupe. But, unfortunately, their personality, the quality that rendered them so popular with the great body of their hearers, was precisely the quality that rendered them unwelcome to a powerful minority. Finding that remonstrance could not induce the trouvers to soften this characteristic, and probably conceiving that, fustigation, tongue-slitting, and assassination, were not precisely the remedies to be applied with success to four atheletic youths who knew how to handle their weapons, the parties aggrieved appealed to the Papal Legate at Avignon. This dignitary lent a ready ear to the complaint, for it was proved, though hardly to his satisfaction, that Guy and his company were accustomed to treat Churchmen as they treated laymen, not sparing the Legate himself, nor even his superior, the Pope. Guy and his kin were far from being the only troubadours who indulged their satire to this extent. But it happened that the manager of the *troupe* was in orders, and, consequently, amenable to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Legate, therefore, found little difficulty in reducing the party from Uzes to submission. He made them promise with an oath that they would never more make songs against the Pope, or against any other prince, lay or clerical. "And this," adds Nostradamus, "was the reason that these poets, who were so excellent that I would willingly call them prophets, never afterwards

composed, or at least published, any songs, but returned home with much wealth—thanks to their poetry."

Wandering troubadours did not always make such prudent use of their profits as some of those we have mentioned. Too many of them followed the example of William Magret, concerning whom a biographer, who was not an Irishman, remarked that he wasted every penny he received in gaming, and—spent the rest in the taverns! The said Magret, it was added, was always poor and in tatters, and finished his career in a Spanish hospital. Similar penury was the lot of all the vagabonds at one time or another. Their period of probation was always a period of hardship; and circumstances over which they had no control—as war, pestilence, famine, and the death of patrons—occasionally renewed its miseries. But, sooth to say, their pecuniary difficulties were mostly to be traced to their own follies. These dilemmas afforded an inexhaustible source of satire to their rivals. For instance, Rambaud of Vaqueiras, having published a piece in which he charged the Marquis of Malespina with no less an offence than highway robbery, the Marquis, after acknowledging the crime—and justifying it, too, in the style of Robin Hood—thought it a sufficient retort to remind Rambaud—in very good verse, be it understood—how he had seen him at Pavia foot sore and actually in want of food. The Monk of Montmayor, too, delights to record how William Adhemar used to strut about in the discarded finery of his noble patrons. Not unfrequently the poet himself took to jesting on the same theme, probably with the view of anticipating and blunting the ridicule of others as in the following tenzon:—

Said Guy, "Oh, ancient mantle! with thy rusty, musty plush,
Thy stains, and general shabbiness, thou hast put me to the blush;
Thou hast caused me grievous trouble, thou hast brought me lasting shame;
I would, ere I had worn thee, I had given thee to the flame!
Of a bewitching lady thou hast lost me all the grace,
Because of thee, thou wretched rag, I ne'er shall see her face."

"Oh, Scorner!" said the mantle, "hast thou, then, cast away
All memory of my services on many a better day?
That I am stained and shabby I know, sir, to my cost;
But came it not from sheltering thee in storm, and rain, and frost?
I grieve that I have caused thee to be jilted by yon maid!
Much rather would I wrap ye both down there beneath the shade."

Then Guy unto his bosom his worn old mantle caught,
Saying, "I thank thee for thy goodwill, and for that pretty thought.
No longer of thy wretched plight shalt thou have cause to grieve,
Nor thy master of his lady-love a second time bereave.
Thy rents shall all be darned, and, to cover every stain,
In crimson of the deepest hue I'll have thee dyed again."

"Bosh!" said the cloak, as backward upon the breeze it fluttered,
"With pretty phrases never yet were any parsnips buttered!
That story for the horse marines, O master mine, may do;
I'm used to thy fine promises, and to their rupture too.
My rents will ne'er diminish until thy rents increase,
About the Eve of Good St. Tib*—so, master, hold thy peace!"

It must be admitted that when the poet found himself in a difficulty of the kind mentioned above he generally developed an ingenuity as rapid in its effects, and just as decisive, as the cap of Fortunatus. A good instance occurs in the story of Peyre de Ruer. Once upon a time this genius conceived a trobar's attachment a thing more remarkable for intensity than endurance—for a Neapolitan damsel, whose acquaintance he had formed in the neighbourhood of Aix. This lady knew

* A festival which occurs neither before Christmas nor after, and which therefore, is equivalent to "the Greek Kalends."

how to keep him dangling at arm's length until he had spent all his money, and disposed of his horses, baggage, and finery besides. Then she gave him to understand that his attentions were not quite so welcome as they had been. This awakened Peyre, not, indeed, from his dream of love, but to a very lively sense of his situation. He, however, was not a man to despond, even though it was Holy Week, a season in which his particular art was quite at a discount. Borrowing a gown from a tavern acquaintance of the Benedictine order, he betook himself to the nearest fashionable shrine, which he found thronged with devotees. Obtaining an interview with the curé, he gave that worthy to understand that he was a monk who held a preaching licence from his superior; and he exhibited a folded paper, which he declared was the said licence, neatly drawn up in Latin. The priest, as he surmised, was blind in his Latin eye—an infirmity coextensive in those days with deafness in the Latin ear—and, therefore, made no attempt to examine the pretended licence. He welcomed its bearer as a priest and a brother, and agreed to grant him the use of his pulpit on the following day. That night it is whispered that the true priest and the false one did not seek their respective couches until far on in the small hours. The curé declared that his brother and himself were engaged in a species of mental gymnastics called wrestling in prayer; but the scandal-mongers remarked that the said prayers sounded singularly like the accompaniment of profane revelry. The equivocal sound died away at length, Good Friday, dawned and the curé and his guest hastened to the church, with cheeks somewhat pale and eyes sunken, but otherwise as grave and decorus as good priests should be. At sermon-time Peyre mounted the pulpit to make "a small oration."

The novelty of the position, however, abashed him, and he stood for a few minutes, like one of Scott's heroes, unable to muster a single oratorical idea. Feeling that something must be done, and not knowing what else to do, Peyre, "all of a sudden, and as bold as brass," began to sing a doleful love-song :—

Pauc m 'an valgut mos precs ny mos prezies,
Ny jauzimen d'ausel, ny flour d'eglay,
Ny lou plazer que Dieu transmet en May,
Quand on vey verd lous prats ny lous garryes.

Epauc my val (segon lo qu'yeu vey aras,)
Lou dol qu'yeu au que m' aucy e m' accor ;
Ou, qu 'yeu fussa reclus subra un gran tor,
Que sufertar tant greus dolors amaras.

From prayer and tear no solace do I glean ;
No succour from the joyous May that throngs
The bowers with birds and bloom, with flowers and songs,
And clothes the gardens and the glebe in green.

And little me avails (too well I know)
The pangs that wound my heart or rather slay—
Oh, that within a dungeon dark I lay,
To bear no more this weight of am'rous love !*

By the time his song was finished, and while the people were yet under the influence of the amazement created by this odd prelude, Peyre had recovered his self-possession. Adroitly using the song as a text, he launched forth into a sermon on the subject of the day, " preaching with a vehemence that subdued the whole congregation to tears." The last, however, must not be

* It was not uncommon for the more serious preachers of the period to adopt a similar text. Among the Arundel manuscripts, in the British Museum, there is a Latin sermon by the celebrated Langton, in which the thing is done. The Cardinal quotes eight lines of a Norman-French love-song addressed to a certain "la bell Aliez," and applies them to the Virgin.

accepted as a proof of unusual eloquence on the part of the preacher. In those days it was so generally regarded as "the correct thing" to weep during a Good Friday sermon, that dry eyes at such a time were never excused, except in one who, like Joe Miller's hero, happened to belong to another parish. Having closed his discourse, Peyre recited the seven penitential psalms reduced to rhyme, to the great delight of his hearers, who thought these specimens of Provençal poetry the finest things of the sort in the world. Finally, giving them his blessing, he took post at the church-door, where, "with downcast eyes and melancholy looks," he besought alms. Nor did he ask in vain, for his hood was filled to overflowing with gold and silver. Another night of what the worthy curé termed "wrestling in prayer," and his neighbours termed "drinking and singing," followed this very successful sermon. Then Peyre bade adieu to his host and returned to the world. With a portion of his singularly obtained funds he replaced his equipage. He then hurried to his Neapolitan, who received him graciously. And here, with our reader's permission, we take leave of the whole excellent company of WANDERING TROUBADOURS.

# RAMBAUD OF VAQUIERAS.

WE know very little of the early life of Rambaud of Vaquieras. The central portion of his career is seamed with broad streaks of mist, and the close is a perfect blank. Among the stories of the troubadours there is none more imperfect than his, and not one more interesting. His father was a poor knight of the Principality of Orange, and he himself began life poorer still, being utterly landless. This was probably as much the result of youthful indiscretion as of ancestral poverty. In one old Provençal manuscript it is stated that, at this period, he was looked upon universally as "a fool"—a term which another account softens into "little prudent." Imprudent or not, he possessed high poetic ability, which his necessities speedily developed. Betaking him to the usual resource of Provençal gentlemen in difficulties, he became a professional troubadour. Blessed with an attractive person and many amiable qualities, and being withal, according to the notions of the age, a thorough gentleman, he rose rapidly to renown. Contrary to the proverbial fate of gifted men, he seems to have been appreciated at his true value, and, in the first instance, at home. It is told that his feudal chief, William of Baux, Prince of Orange, attached him to his court, that he rewarded him with great and substantial favours, and that he brought his poetry into high esteem among

great personages. Of Rambaud's literary genius, the older writers remark that his warlike pieces were full of energy and fire, but that he became tedious when he sang of love. Such, also, is our own opinion, with the addition that we perceive a vein of pleasant humour, seldom to be found among the troubadours, running through many of his compositions, as, for instance, through the following, in which he describes a tournament. Among the Provençals, the latter, we may premise, was not exactly the stern presentment of battle that it showed itself more to the northward, but something akin to the javelin play of the Moors :—

I'll tell you of our tournament without circumlocution,
What warriors bravest shone therein, and did most execution.
Of who stood up and who fell down I'll say the simple truth :
To magnify in love or war, trust me, I'm not the youth.

The Lord of Baux began the fray—I err, it was his horse—
A giant beast that overthrew whatever crossed its course :
He backed against a noble count, and hurled him to the ground,
And then disabled with his kicks fell twenty horses round !

Among the crowd your Dragonel conspicuous appeared,
As under him his fiery barb most furious plunged and reared.
'Twixt steed and rider to the last uncertain was the fray,
For while the latter bit the dust, the former ran away.

Count Beaucire was released the next from his unruly steed,
And thus enabled one to mount more meet for martial deed.
Then Barral of Marseilles, good knight, a fine career did make,
Till, by a knight still better, he was flung into a brake.

Across the lists Mondragon's lord I saw most boldly prance,
And overthrow a knight, himself, without breaking his lance.
A squire, whose steed was skin and bone, it was that dealt the blow :
Mondragon calmly raised himself and sought a safer foe.

Mevallion's lord dashed bravely on, completely clad in mail ;
The barb that bore him was a trifle larger than a quail ;
His spear struck Nicholas on the helm ; good Nicholas laughed
amain ;
To him the shock was such as might have dealt a drop of rain.

The Prince of Orange boldly charged three warriors in a row,
Because his horse would plunge that way, whether he would or no;
They fled, but if from man or horse to him it mattered nought,
Since, chasing like a victor, he himself a victor thought.

Rambaud of Vaquieras seems to have made a lengthened stay at the Court of Courteson (the chief town of Orange). It is thought that at this time he formed a sort of poetic fraternity with that licensed profligate, Rambaud of Orange, because Petrarch joined the two names in three lines of his "Trionfo d'Amor":—

E quei che fur conquisi con più guerra,
I dico l' uno e l' altro Rambaldo,
Che cantar pur Beatrice in Monferrato.

These lines, it may be observed, have furnished the erudite with one of those subjects wherewith to puzzle themselves and their readers, in which the merely erudite delight. Petrarch, no doubt, had his reasons for coupling the names. Perhaps he did so under the influence of that despotic thing, rhyme; or for the same reason that, a little before, induced him to couple the names of two individuals, the Guidos, who lived at different periods; or because he possessed evidence of the existence of fraternity between the Rambauds which has not come down to us. The matter, however, is not worth discussion, and hardly worth notice.

Rambaud of Vaquieras seems to have quitted his comfortable quarters at Courteson for a reason unusual among people of his profession: he simply discarded his patron. William of Orange belonged to a family that affected a claim to the sovereignty of Provence, and was tempted, partly by injudicious ambition, and partly by apparently favourable circumstances, to set himself up in opposition to the reigning Counts. At first he was countenanced by the German Emperor, who

claimed to be the suzerain of Provence, and who gratified William with the empty title of King of Arles. The Emperor, however, gave the new king no substantial support, and, the latter being unable to cope alone with his opponent, turned for aid to the King of France. For reasons of which we shall say a word elsewhere, the Provençals detested the French, and resolutely opposed the Northern policy of consolidation. To be anti-French was the leading maxim of all patriotic Provençals; and the troubadours, always the representatives of public opinion, were anti-French to a man. Rambaud of Vaquieras was not an exception. So far he had supported his patron in his opposition to the House of Aragon with sword and pen; but when William allied himself with the French, Rambaud changed sides, and levelled his serventes at him whom he had so lately eulogised.

Unfortunately for the Prince of Orange, certain circumstances had rendered him an excellent subject for raillery. On one occasion, being involved in pecuniary difficulties, probably by his ambitious struggle, he resorted to a means of replenishing his purse not uncommon at the time. It was simply highway robbery, a profession practised during the twelfth century by personages of even higher rank than Robin Hood, that is if the latter really were Earl of Huntingdon. Hardly a generation before a brother of the King of France had shown brilliantly in cutting purses, and, at that very period, exalted members of the houses of Couci and Montmorency were winning distinction in the same line. Among the passengers who underwent the stripping dexterity of his Highness of Orange was a northern merchant, who lost no time in making formal complaint to Philip Augustus. The latter was a power-

ful monarch, who understood full well the necessity of conciliating the mercantile classes. But the Prince of Orange was a friend, Provence was a long way off, and he was then at blows with a terrible antagonist, Cœur de Lion. The king, therefore, told the merchant to right himself if he could, and thought no more of the matter. Most people would have regarded such an answer as an intimation to take no further steps; but this particular merchant was possessed by just such a spirit as induced one of his class and country, some two centuries ago, to declare war on his own account against a king of England. He, therefore, determined to use the licence he had received. He wrote a letter to the Prince of Orange, inviting him to Paris, and to this letter he forged the royal seal and signature. It was precisely the device to succeed in an age in which letter-writing was little practised, and in which, therefore, skill in detecting forgery had not yet been developed. William was deceived, as the merchant expected, and set out for Paris. On the way the letter-writer contrived to intercept the prince, and make him prisoner. He held him fast, too, until he compelled him to disgorge his plunder, and sufficient interest besides, in the way of ransom. All the world heard of the trick, and laughed; and William, who saw that a display of ill-temper was not likely to mend matters, tried to laugh with the world as he made his way homewards. But he did not reach Courteson quite so soon or so easily as he could have wished. Not liking, perhaps, the route on which he had suffered such an awkward mishap, he chose to return to his principality by water. Now it happened that on the banks of the Rhone there lay an estate which he had ravaged not long before, and its owner, Aymerie of Valentinois, determined to use the opportunity thrown in his way by

his enemy, after the manner of the merchant. A number of fishermen in his employ kept strict watch on the river, and arrested the Prince, without the smallest difficulty, as he floated carelessly by. Aymerie exacted even a heavier ransom than his predecessor. All the world, especially the Provençal portion thereof, laughed louder than before. But William did not laugh this time. His misadventures were sung everywhere in countless serventes. One of the most biting was composed by the Count of Cavaillon, who handed it to a wandering minstrel with these words, which formed the concluding stanza of the piece:—"Go, Bonnardo, and advise this mighty king not to travel far from his enormous kingdom, save with sufficient escort. He is subject to being taken prisoner." Bonnardo did exactly as he was told, and with impunity; for in those days a Provençal noble would as soon have thought of whipping a mere singer as of stripping an altar. Rambaud, too, had his fling at his late patron, but the piece does not seem either pointed or humorous. It merely taunted the prince with allowing himself to be cheated by a false seal, and afterwards to be captured as a minnow is caught by a pike. William retorted very shortly: casting an old sneer at Rambaud, he pronounced him "the biggest fool" he ever knew.

Rambaud quitted Provence for Italy; why we are not informed, and shall not attempt to speculate. He commenced his journey in a plight that fully justified his repute for folly in matters pecuniary. None of the substantial favours bestowed upon him by the Prince of Orange had abided with him. In fact he closed his connection with the Court of Courteson as poor as he began it. He was destitute of even a horse, and continued his journey "afoot like a base jongleur," as a literary oppo-

nent afterwards took care to remind him. One of his pieces gives us a glimpse of him in the course of this journey. It is a tenzon in which he makes love to the wife of a Genoese trader, after the high-flown manner of the Provençals, and in which she responds after the matter-of-fact and vulgar manner of her class. The thing is evidently satiric of the trading classes, who were even then beginning to tread too closely on the heels of the aristocracy in the pursuit of luxury:—

RAMBAUD.

I pray you, pretty lady, that to love me you would try;
So rich are you in virtue that your humble slave am I.
And, then, you are so knowing in the rules of etiquette—
A dame more fascinating, I swear, I never met!
For you I'd forfeit Genoa, though all its wealth were mine:
Oh, love me, then, in charity, nor longer let me pine!

LADY.

Be quiet with your teazing now, you cunning, saucy Jew!
Were you to sigh here all your life I never could like you.
I'd rather twist your neck about, you sweet-tongued cheat from Provence.
My husband is a nicer man; so, rascal, get you off hence.

RAMBAUD.

Oh, lady, you're so tasteful, so elegant, so neat!
I'm dying for your good-will; then grant it, I entreat.
Delight is your companion, discretion is your guide;
'Tis therefore I prefer you to all the world beside;
'Tis therefore that, without reserve, I am your lover true—
My love impels to ask for yours; then, lady, grant it, do!

LADY.

Now what a fool you must be, man, to talk to me like that.
Just walk your chalks; you havn't the sense of e'en a decent cat.
Lawks! what a naughty thing 't would be to bow to your intent!
Were you a king or emperor I don't think I'd consent.
To the wrong shop you've brought your wares. Come, prater, now be dumb;
Sure wicked wretches they must be i' the place from whence you come.

RAMBAUD.

Oh, lady, do not treat me thus!—'tis neither just nor right;
Nay, further, I regret to add, that it is not polite.
Of a gentleman all well-bred folk allow it is the part
To tell his lady that he loves, to show her all his heart;
And her to beg that she would deign to pity his sad plight,
Protesting, as he pleads, that he her servant is and knight.
You are as fresh and fair of hue as is the rose in bloom!
But that's a common thing, my dear, so therefore don't presume.
Yet still I prize you, and, in turn, you ought to value me,
And if you won't 'twill be a crime 'gainst heaven and courtesy.

LADY.

Shut up! Get out! Make yourself scarce! I vow I've heard enough!
I do not care one single straw for your Provençal stuff!
All that you can say to me is so much Greek or Dutch;
I do not care for you at all, nor could for any such.
There, hold you jaw! Lord, if he knew!—I'm speaking of my spouse—
I'd catch it awfully, I know! So, fellow, leave the house!

How Rambaud quitted Genoa, and why, remains untold. Nor do we know what afterwards befell him, until a servente represents him as having been discovered at Pavia in the lowest state of misery—absolutely in want of food—by the writer, the Marquis Albert of Malespina. It would seem that this noble not only relieved the necessities of the troubadour, but introduced him to one of the most brilliant courts of the period, that of Boniface, Marquis of Montferrat. The latter belonged to a family of the highest renown. His father had been one of the most distinguished Crusaders of the twelfth century, and two of his brothers had won great names in the Holy Wars. One of the two, Conrad,—he who fell by the hands of the Assassins—had borne for a period the title of King of Jerusalem. Boniface himself was perhaps the most brilliant member of this heroic family. Unrivalled in military exercises,

a daring soldier, a skilful captain, a poet, the very soul of honour, and generous and disinterested in the highest degree, he was the beau-ideal of knighthood. It speaks well for the character of Rambaud that Boniface immediately conceived for him a friendship which strengthened with years. Indeed, they were never afterwards separated. Nor was it merely on account of his amiability, or of his social and literary qualities, that the marquis valued the minstrel. Rambaud had other recommendations, as he reminded his master in one of his canzons:—"I can boast, my lord, that I know how to conduct myself in your court; I can be liberal, obedient, agreeable, and discreet. Nobody can reproach me with insolence, nor can any say that I ever shrank from your side in battle, or did not prefer your renown even to my own life." And it would appear that there was little or no exaggeration in these statements.

Rambaud accompanied Boniface in the expedition which the Emperor Henry VI. conducted to Sicily in 1194, and he seems to have done good service therein. In one of his canzons he mentions some of the experiences of himself and his patron in the course of the campaign. "You remember," said he, addressing Boniface, "when you were riding near Aci Real with only ten companions, how you were assailed by four hundred hostile troopers. Disdaining to fly as little as a falcon before a flock of cranes, you met them boldly. But the odds against you were too great, and, in spite of the most desperate resistance, you were in extremities when I came up with aid. We raised the Marquis, Albert of Malespina, who had been beaten to the ground. Then we dashed against the foe, and drove them with ignominy from the field. I have been in many grievous prisons for having served you well in

your wars," adds Rambaud, thus implying that on other occasions, if not on this one, he had secured the escape of the marquis by allowing himself to be captured in his stead. Such marks of devotion were common in those chivalrous times, and were rendered the easier by the custom, common among great chiefs, of dressing and arming their more favoured gentlemen precisely like themselves, an honour that Boniface had not neglected to accord to Rambaud. "For you," the latter goes on to say, "have I led many forlorn hopes, fired numerous strong places, and performed other bold actions. At Messina I came up when you were beaten to the ground; I covered you with my cloak; I flung myself between you and the spears that were aimed at your head and heart. When you took Randasso Paterno (Val di Dimone) and Calatagirone (Val di Noto), and when you took Palermo, I was still the closest to your banner." Nor was Rambaud unrewarded. He received knighthood from the honour-giving hand of the marquis himself, who even made him, in some respects, his equal, by becoming his sworn brother-in-arms. Perhaps the latter fact accounts to some extent for the bold freedom of Rambaud's lays. But this freedom was not likely to prove offensive to the marquis, since the singer never said one word in praise of himself without contriving to say two in praise of his chief—to whom, indeed, he delighted to render himself, in battle and in ballad, an admirable foil.

The nine or ten years immediately following the Sicilian expedition were years of prosperity to the troubadour. Whether as a knight or a poet, he was bound to have a mistress, and the lady of his choice was the "bright particular star" of the Court of Montferrat, Beatrice, sister of the marquis, and wife of Enrico

del Carretto, lord of Finale. That she merited his preference not less by personal worth than by her position, appears from the fact that she was one of the few mentioned by another troubadour, Aymerie of Beauvoir, as models of all that was excellent in woman. To apprise her of his sentiments he adopted a method usual when the lover was of rank much below the dame. "Have the goodness, madam," said he one day, "to aid me with your counsel, of which I stand greatly in need. I love the most beautiful and amiable lady in the world. I see her and speak with her continually; but so much do her transcendent merits overawe me that I dare not reveal my feelings. For the sake of heaven, madam, I beg you to say how I am to act. Am I to die of love, or must I die of fear when I have revealed it?" This was speaking quite as an accomplished gentleman of the period. And in her reply Beatrice spoke equally as an accomplished lady of the period. "A loyal gentleman," said she, "who loves a lady whom he fears and respects would be guilty of great wrong were he to allow himself to die in silence of his passion. It is his duty to explain his feelings to the lady of his choice before allowing himself to come to such an extremity. I advise you, therefore, to make known your affection, and to request your lady to retain you as her cavaliér servénte. If she be prudent and courteous she will not take it amiss. Far from considering your request dishonouring, she will esteem you the more for it. Indeed, such, is your worth that there is not a lady in the world, even were she a queen or an empress, that ought not to consider herself happy in having such an one for her knight." This very explicit reply could produce but one result; and thus Rambaud was established as the gallant of Beatrice.

Our poet's time was not spent exclusively in singing, feasting, and love-making. His brother-in-arms was a thorough knight-errant, who delighted in rectifying wrongs, particularly when the wronged ones happened to be damsels. "More than a hundred maidens," sang Rambaud, have I seen you wed to barons of high degree, *without ever taking advantage of their weakness, though you were in the prime of manhood.* I have known you make the fortunes of scores of worthy knights, and punish as many more, who deserved it, with utter ruin. So many widows and orphans have I beheld you comfort, so many of the wretched have I seen you relieve, so many of the deserving raise up, and so many of the wicked put down, that, if good deeds could win Paradise, you would be sure of high place therein." And of one of these exploits, which comprised in itself the comfort of the afflicted, the relief of the distressed, and the punishment of the wicked, Rambaud gives the following most interesting account:—"Do you remember the evening, when the jongleur Aimonet rushed, breathless and travel-stained, into the hall, to inform you that they were going to carry Jacobina into Sardinia, to wed her there against her will? Then you bethought you of your last meeting with her; how she threw herself, weeping, into your arms, and how touchingly she entreated you to defend her against the cruel tyranny of her uncle. After supper five of us armed and mounted. There was yourself my lord marquis, Guyot, Hugonet d'Alfar, Bertauden, who guided us so well, and myself. We galloped all night through the darkness; we reached the gate just as they were bearing her away to place her in the ship. It was I who tore her from the midst of them, while all the people shouted. Horse and foot chased us hard; but we pushed our chargers to the

utmost, and left pursuit behind. We thought ourselves out of danger, when we were intercepted by those of Pietra. Seeing so many cavaliers, so many shields gleaming, and so many banners waving, we were somewhat afraid; it would be useless to deny it. We turned from the road, and concealed ourselves among the hills between Finale and Albenga. During our retreat to cover and our stay therein, we heard horns and trumpets sounding, calls to arms, and signals repeated on all sides. Two days were we there without food, and on the third we resumed our course. In a narrow defile we encountered twelve freebooters, nor knew what to do, for we dared not charge them on horseback. Then I dismounted, and ran forward to assail them. I received the thrust of a lance, but I wounded three or four, and made them turn their backs. Being joined by my comrades, we drove off the thieves, and traversed the pass in safety. Doubtless you will remember how gaily we dined that day, though we had only one loaf among us, and not a drop to drink. That evening we reached Nice, where Pinclair received us joyfully. Next morning you gave Jacobina to her cousin Anselmo, whom afterwards you enabled to recover his county of Ventimiglia from his usurping uncle."

From beginning to end the foregoing story carries the stamp of truth. The ride along the road, then, as now, called "the Corniche," was as exciting as that of "Young Lochinvar," from Netherby. And the two days sojourn among the hills will, no doubt, remind our readers of the flight of "Lord Ullin's Daughter." Those, indeed, must have been romantic times when a single adventure could include the more striking incidents of two such ballads. Between Albenga and Finale is the Cave of St. Lucia, which might have served the party as a place,

of shelter. It is now occupied in part by a chapel, which probably was erected in gratitude for some such service. The lady Jacobina was evidently of high descent, being perhaps niece to the Count of Savoy, a prince who then laid claim to Ventimiglia. Nor was this the only deed of the kind performed by Boniface. Rambaud alludes to a similar one in which he carried off the lady Soldina from the strongest fortress of the Marquis of Malespina, and gave her to Boson d'Anguillar, who was dying for love of her.

But while sharing and winning much renown in these dashing enterprises—of which it may be presumed that he suggested not a few—the course of Rambaud's love did not run smooth. In the court of Chivasso, the capital of Montferrat, there were those who envied his favour with Beatrice, and who took advantage of his frequent absences to impair it. Some did their worst to disparage his deeds and to blacken his fame. Others, with more skill, appealed to the pride of Beatrice, and dwelt on the disparity of rank between herself and her lover. The former did not malign altogether in vain, as the poet bitterly complains; but the latter were by far the more successful. One day—it might have been immediately subsequent to the achievement of a chivalrous enterprise, Rambaud appeared before his dame, and addressed her as usual. Greatly was he amazed, and not less mortified, when she put on her haughtiest air, and commanded him to make love to his equals, since she was resolved to have nothing more to say to him. Confounded by this rebuff, the troubadour adopted the course prescribed in such circumstances, though he did not carry it to the same lengths as some others. He neglected his person, and cast aside his guitar; but he did not turn hermit, nor even quit the

court. While silent himself, he knew how to procure those who could sing pieces very expressive of his dominant feelings. Some of these were tirades against the sex in general, and some were levelled at his mistress. Neither were bitter, for Rambaud was not bilious; but those addresses to Beatrice were about the most curious ever inspired by the injustice of a mistress. One specimen will suffice:—

The peacock, when he contemplates
The pretty tail he elevates,
Its hundred eyes, its brilliant dyes,
Its nodding pride, its shape, its size,
Until, in swelling vanity,
Upon the nearest wall climbs he,
That his fine plumage all may see—
This peacock is a type of me
When the perfections of my dame
All her grace of form and feature,
I contemplate, till they elate, and puff me up, just like that creature;
But too soon one little word,
Piercing deeper than a sword,
"No," reduces me to shame.

While Rambaud was indulging his grief by carrying song and slovenliness to ridiculous extremes, two wandering minstrels arrived at court. Both played skilfully on the violin, and both excelled in dancing. Between them they had devised a very quick step, which they footed to their own music, greatly to the delight of all the spectators but one. While everybody else applauded, Rambaud leant against the wall in gloomy abstraction. The marquis had noticed with regret the melancholy of his friend on former occasions. Not improbably he knew that another person regretted it just as much as himself; he considered the present a favourable time for bringing it to an end, and he determined to do this in a way that should prevent its

renewal. "Come, come," said he to Rambaud, while the detractors listened amazed, "why so sad? How is it that you alone take no pleasure in the entertainment? There is no gentleman of my acquaintance who ought to be more joyous. Are you not the accepted cavalier of my sister?" "Alas!" replied the sad poet, "I, of all men living, have the least reason for gaiety." "Pooh!" said the marquis; "come along with me!" And, drawing his arm within his own, Boniface led his brother-in-arms to Beatrice. "For love of me and of this gentle company," said Boniface, "it is my wish that you command Rambaud to resume his accustomed happy mood and to sing as he used to do." The lady needed only the excuse furnished by such an appeal in order to comply. Rambaud was restored to her favour—or rather accorded a higher place therein than before—and his detractors were for ever silenced. We need not say that he marked the event by various canticles, of which we venture to paraphrase one.

To-morrow is the merry, cheery, festal first of May.
If thou wouldst have me, lady mine, among the rest be gay,
Then send me, ere the morning dawn—oh, darling that thou art!—
A message and a token that shall pierce each jealous heart.
If this thou doest not in thy pride, oh, then, my lady, know—
The triumph of mine enemies will double all my woe!
If I were now to forfeit thee, the day would fatal be
But no; I cannot dream a day so dread will come to me.
Dismissal of presumption is the worthy recompense,
While I have loved, and still shall love, with fear and reverence.

Rambaud, without doubt, received the message and the token that he requested, for we hear no more of his crosses in love.

Shortly after the reconciliation recorded above Rambaud penned not the least curious of his pieces. It was founded on an incident perhaps not unusual even

in our own days, though certainly it has not often received notice in song. One day the Countess Beatrice took it into her head to array herself as a warrior—in strictest privacy, of course—her own apartments being the scene, and all the bolts being well drawn. Having assumed the panoply of war, and donned the glittering cuirass and the plumed helm, with brassard, greave, gauntlet, and weapons offensive to match, she strutted up and down the chamber with all the airs of a newly-fledged man-at-arms. She then drew her sword and brandished it against the tapestry, in which she pierced a good many holes. But Rambaud, accompanied by his brother-in-arms it may be presumed, was outside the door. In this door there happened to be a chink, and to the chink the pair applied their eyes, and witnessed the whole performance. They withdrew, much amused, one of them to make the scene the subject of a lengthy canzon. Therein he conceived that all the rival beauties of the neighbouring lands had declared war against the Bel Cavalier, the pet name by which for ever afterwards he preferred to designate his mistress —and told how they assembled, under the Countess of Savoy, to assail her with "war, flame, smoke, and dust." The older ladies hastened to join the ranks because they had lost all the youth, beauty, and merit which she still retained in perfection; and the younger swelled the host because the fame of the Bel Cavalier so far surpassed their own. They advanced to besiege her with all "the pomp and circumstance of war." Before the fray began Madame de Savoy made a suitable harangue in which she exhorted her followers to do their utmost against this formidable rival, who deprived them of so much renown and homage. The attack began bravely. Engines were worked, arrows discharged, and stones hurled, and

the miners plied their craft beneath the ramparts, amid all the tumult of a heady fight. At last the ladders were placed, and the assailants prepared to mount to the assault. But the Bel Cavalier, the heroine of Courtesy, was undismayed. Bestriding her charger, without either helm or cuirass, mailed only in her beauty, and wielding her sword, she sallied against her foes. All went down beneath her blows. They fled in thousands before her lovely but resistless strength. She pursued them to the stronghold, where she shut them in, and subjected them in turn to close and vigorous, and eventually successful siege. The piece, light as it is, has value on many accounts. It is a picture of the warfare of the period. It speaks of the war-chariot bearing the banner and the bell, so familiar to the students of mediæval history; of mining and of Greek fire; it gives a fair representation of military science as it then was; and it alludes, besides, to the insurrection of the peasants of Maurienne against their clerical seigneurs, which was one of the earliest popular revolts of which modern history takes notice.

Thus, charming all around him with his humorous and heroic lays, accompanying the gallant marquis in all his exciting rides, and paying due court to the lady Beatrice, Rambaud passed his life delightfully in Montferrat, until the preaching of Fulk of Neuilly roused the chivalry of France, Champagne, and Flanders to a new crusade. It is probable that Boniface had no intention of taking part in this enterprise at first. But the chosen General-in-Chief, the Count of Champagne, dying as the crusaders were about to depart, and the remaining leaders being unable to select a successor from among themselves, they despatched a solemn embassy to the Marquis of Montferrat, whose character as a

knight and a captain was well known, beseeching him to join them as their leader. The offer was too flattering to be refused by a man like Boniface. Repairing at once to Soissons, he was there solemnly installed in his new dignity. This circumstance, so gratifying to the pride of the House of Montferrat, was made the theme of the following canzon by the brother-in-arms of the marquis :

Who does not see that God is pleased the good to recompense,
Since Montferrat so high he lifts o'er every other prince?
All those who take the cross to-day have chosen him to head
Their conquering march unto the mount whereon the Saviour bled.
Who gave him fame, and lands, and wealth, and vassals true and brave,
Be sure, will grant him full success on and beyond the wave.
As went the kings—the favoured three—to Bethlem's holy towers,
With him we'll go, and win them, too, from all the Moslem powers.
St. Nicholas directs the fleet, St. George is with the host ;
We'll raise our banners as we near the ever-honoured coast :
We'll leap thereon, we'll crush the foe, we'll shatter spear and sword,
And under Jordan's swelling wave we'll thrust the cursed horde.
Let Christian valour in the West ours in the East excel,
And, while the Marquis hunts the Turk, let Spain the Moor expel.
Bel Cavalier, for whom I write, O ! tell if for your sake,
For which alone I live, shall I the cross refuse or take?
Such joy with you I feel, such woe when from you I divide,
That nothing but your own command can send me from your side.

The last lines of his canzon correctly described the writer's feelings. Though rejoicing in the honour done to his patron, Rambaud was not willing to take a share in the expedition himself. He says, indeed, in another composition, that he had made up his mind to remain in attendance on Beatrice, but that he could not say "No" when the marquis requested him to accompany him.

History relates how the armament intended to drive

the Saracens from Palestine was directed against the Greek Christians by the consummate ability of that admirable representative of the Venice of the thirteenth century and its far-sighted policy, Enrico Dandola; how he rendered the Crusaders the docile instruments of Venetian interest, and how, by means of their swords, he won for his countrymen a possession—the island of Candia—which they held for no less than four hundred and fifty years. It was the real commencement of Venetian power and grandeur, and ultimately it proved the main cause of the destruction of both. The City of the Lagoons never recovered from the exhaustion caused by the prolonged and costly warfare, in which Candia was wrested from them by the Turks. Thus, sooner or later, national as well as individual sin becomes its own avenger.

History has not forgotten to relate the exploits of the marquis, nor how the commanding genius of the grand old Venetian—such a true king of men as is only nurtured by seagoing peoples—deprived him of the crown that was fairly his due. But history says nothing of the achievements of his brother-in-arms; and, unfortunately, the glimpses which we catch of those deeds in the songs of Rambaud do not enable us to give a connected outline of his adventures in the East. In one of these songs we are told—half in jest, half in earnest—how he followed the banner of the marquis through all the perils attending the capture of Byzantium. "Loaded with old iron like a Brabançon mercenary," he writes, "I fought on the steps of the palace, and received a thrust that penetrated my armour. I was by your side when the Emperor, seeing how desperately and merrily you fought, though we were as one against a thousand, and how valiantly the Count of Flanders and his

comrades supported us, let his heart drop into his heels, and took to flight, leaving behind him his handsome daughter and his treasures. We pursued as the wolf follows the lamb, or the hawk chases the sparrow." In another song Rambaud vaunts that he assisted the marquis to storm cities, to capture princes and kings, and to secure kingdoms. He adds, with a little excusable exaggeration, that his chief expelled the Emperor from his dominions in order to bestow them on another. And he concludes with a piece of information, which, though no more than we expected, nevertheless pleases us much—that his patron had raised him to wealth and honour—an assertion which he emphasises with the remark—"This is the simple truth."

For three years Boniface led a stirring life, fighting over every inch of classic Greece, besieging Corinth, forcing the pass of Thermopylæ, holding tournaments on the scene of the Olympic games, reviving the days of the centaurs on the plains of Thessaly, and traversing the Spartan domains with a band of warriors that could have scattered the followers of Agesilaus like chaff before the wind. A series of ballads commemorative of his exploits during these years, by such a soldier-poet as Rambaud of Vaquieras, would be worth their weight in gold counted fifty times over; but such, alas, we have not. Therefore, we can only remark that wherever the marquis, now entitled King, gave battle, there the troubadour contended by his side. Boniface fell, sword in hand, at the siege of Satalia, in 1207; and, as Rambaud of Vaquieras vanishes completely from our sight about the same period, we may conclude that the brothers-in-arms perished together. Taking them for all in all, and making due allowance for their age and its predomiting vices, it must be allowed that they were a noble pair. Our readers,

we are sure, will agree with us when, applying to them a sentence uttered many an age previous, we say that "they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided."

# RAYMOND DE MIRAVALS

RAYMOND DE MIRAVALS is one of the few troubadours who merit special attention. He is one of the few whose strongly-marked individuality refuses classification; and his adventures, in their natural sequence, throw too much light on the manners of his class and country, to be scattered piecemeal among our illustrations of Provençal love and literature. At the beginning of his career he found himself in a position not uncommon to members of the aristocracy of the Langue d'Oc, an aristocracy which, in many respects, bore a singular resemblance to that of Ireland in the eighteenth century. In the hands of a series of reckless-living ancestors, the estates of Miravals had dwindled down to a miserable shred, on which, all counted, there were no more than sixty persons to be found. In those days the labourer lodged with the farmer, and was counted as one of the family. Sixty people then meant no more than four or five families, and as many vassals. Now a feudal lord of the olden time bore much resemblance to a lion. So long as the hunting-grounds of the latter are extended, and the tenants thereof in the shape of graminivora, numerous, the lordly beast flourishes. At the same time his demands, being distributed over a wide area and among many families, are but lightly felt. But when the hunt-

ing-grounds become restricted, and the tenants thereof few, two unpleasant things are sure to happen. The lion's wants are harder to be supplied; his skin, therefore, loses its glossiness, and his sides lose their plumpness. His demands, also, are felt with increasing severity by his diminishing vassals, until a period arrives when the appetite of the lord is certain to exterminate the tenant, and in the event himself, unless both emigrate, the one to avoid being eaten up, and the other to escape the unpleasant predicament of having nothing to eat up. To this miserable state Raymond de Miravals, the lord of an imposing chateau, a narrow domain, and four or five vassals, found himself reduced on succeeding to his inheritance. Having "some bowels"—this was a favourite phrase with our ancestors of two or three hundred years back, who, being a dinner-loving race, and duly appreciating the effects of a good "feed" on the soul as well as on the body, considered the organs of digestion to be the special domain of all that was amiable and compassionate, and therefore of all that was heroic in humanity—having some bowels, then, Raymond de Miravals determined to relieve his scanty company of retainers of his destructive suzerainty for a period. In the twelfth century there were many openings for a young man of rank and spirit who wished to push his fortune. He might enter the Church, wherein good birth, if sufficiently decorous, was always sure of a good benefice. He might go a crusading against the Turks in Palestine, or against the Moors in Spain—a career wherein he was likely to receive many more cuffs than crowns, and one, therefore, to be avoided, unless one happened to be in the last extremity of enthusiasm or despair. If he had a taste for "a life on the rolling wave," he could make his *début* in the noble art of

piracy at any of a hundred ports. If he preferred a rover's life on land, there were free companies even then in existence who, at the conclusion of a war, were given to establishing themselves at very free quarters on the lands adjacent to the scene of their last campaigns, until a new war found fresh employment for their swords, or until a crusade, got up for their especial benefit, exterminated them; or he might follow the example of the Algais, and, enlisting a band of cut-throats, declare himself "the friend of God and the foe of all the world," which was the polite method of intimating that a gentleman had taken to highway robbery. None of these alternatives suited Raymond. "He was deeply learned in the science of love," says Nostradamus. "He was understanding in courteous and courtly manners, and he was more thoroughly instructed in the best knowledge of the period than any other man of whom I have written." He was, besides, an adept in music and in the manufacture of rhymes. Of course, then, he became a troubadour. The life was easy and joyous—in fact, no less made for the man than the man was made for it. His earlier adventures as a bard are unrecorded. We know not in what direction he first directed his steps, whether he betook him to Provence, to Auvergne, to Narborme, or to Toulouse, in the first instance. We know not what middle-aged lady, of "learned, pious, and gallant habits," first received him as cavaliér servénte, nor what budding beauty withdrew him from such allegiance. We are ignorant alike of his earlier *bonnes fortunès* and of the perils in which they involved him. When he presents himself in story it is in the zenth of his success and renown. He has recovered the whole estate of Miravals, he has increased it by many an acre, he has taken to himself a wife, and

he is a favourite with Raymond of Toulouse, who condescends to take lessons from him on the lute, and who is pleased to be termed, in canzon, cobbole, and tenzon, the Audiart, or scholar, of the great master. He is equally prized of the barons of the country including Oliver Saissac and the Viscount of Beziers, and he is highly esteemed of the King of Aragon himself. Better still, "there was neither dame nor damsel, no matter what her condition, who did not desire to be on terms of intimacy with him. All the ladies, indeed, desired to see him, to hear him sing, to know him and be known of him, and to enjoy his familiarities and grant him theirs; because he knew so well how to amuse and please them, and to bring them honour by his songs, that those who were not loved and sung by him were little esteemed." "But for all this," writes the Monk of the Golden Isle and Uc of St. Cæsar, "never did he receive from one of them any favour in the matter of love. It was just the reverse, for every one of them cheated him." Indeed, Peter Vidal was not more remarkable for his follies, nor Bertrand Von Born for his mischief-making capacity, than was Raymond de Miravals for his amorous misfortunes.

Foremost among the ladies that he sang stands the name of Loba de Penautier. She is described as the most beautiful woman of the country, and as no less vain than beautiful. There was nothing in the world that she loved so much as to receive the homage of gentlemen and to become the subject of their songs, and for a time she was fully gratified in both respects. Among her lovers were the Princely Count of Foix, the Barons Oliver de Saissac, Peyre Rotgier of Mirapays and Cabaretz, and Aymerie of Monreal, and the troubadours Vidal and Miravals. "But," says the story-

teller—the same who recounts the wolf-exploit of Vidal—"Miravals loved her best of all, and made her the subject of many songs. And, on account of the high renown to which he had raised her, and because she knew that a singer so esteemed could exalt or degrade her as he pleased, she admitted his attentions, and even 'prometia de far plazer en dreg d'amor e l'avia retenant baizan'" —promised to do him pleasure in right of love, and kissed him in secret—precisely as Maria Garrida d'Albisso had promised and kissed Faudit. "But she did it all to deceive him." By means of this promise and this one kiss, as Miravals complains in a canzon, Loba kept him in her train for two years and five months. Having reason to believe, at the end of this time, that she was deceiving him for the sake of a more favoured gallant, he quitted her, in order to devote himself to the service of the "Marquiza Gemesquia." This lady was the young and beautiful wife of the Count of Minerve, and is described as one "gentle, gay, and young, who had never belied or deceived any, or been belied or deceived of any." Shortly after the secession of Raymond de Miravals from her rule, Loba became the subject of a terrible scandal. It was discovered that the haughty beauty who had scorned the advances of so many, laughed at Vidal, and deceived Miravals, was "no better than she should have been;" that, in short, she had made of the Count de Foix her drut or gallant, and had been carrying on with him that thing so offensive to the manners of the day—a temporary intrigue. "And was this intrigue published through all the country of Carcassonne, and on account thereof was she deprived of praise, honour, and friends;" in one word, subjected to social excommunication. "For in that country they held as dead every lady who made her lover of a high

baron"—not, as explains Millot, the incompetent editor of St. Palaye's Researches, because men of the highest rank were more depraved than their inferiors, which was not and could not be the fact, but just because the Code of Love, here in strict conformity with universal feeling, had laid it down that there should be no gallantry except between parties of equal rank. Full advantage was taken of Loba's fall by all her numerous enemies. Her rivals excited their rhyming gallants to libel her; and those rhyming gallants who had been neglected for the Count of Foix libelled her on their own account, among the bitterest of these assailants being Peter Vidal. Through the whole of the Langue d'Oc there was nothing spoken of but Loba's shame. It was sung in the castle and the cottage, in the street and in the tavern, to the noble and to the peasant; for there were always low-class minstrels in plenty ready and thankful to accept the serventes and other compositions of established masters, and to publish them everywhere to the sound of harp and fiddle. Thus excommunicated, reviled, hooted, laughed at, and, as it would seem, abandoned of her husband also, Loba was unutterably miserable.

While the troubadours taught that loyalty was to be strictly observed towards the loyal, they also taught that it was a good and a praiseworthy act to deceive the deceiver. Nor was this doctrine peculiar to the troubadours. Wherever we cast our eyes—whether into the cloister or into the cabinet, over the camp or around the court—we shall find that the golden rule, as practised in the middle ages, lacked the little qualification that gives it its chief value, and that it was thus expressed: "Do to others as—they do to you." In conformity with the practice of his age, Raymond de

Miravals determined to deceive the one who had so grievously deceived him. With this view he adopted a line of conduct towards Loba that greatly astonished his contemporaries. When all others assailed and villified her, "he began to defend her, to cover her fault, and to excuse her with respect to the count." Raymond's magnanimity made nearly as much noise as Loba's error. The subject heard thereof with varied feelings, for she had dreaded the satire of Raymond, which she felt only too conscious of having deserved, more than that of anyone. She was, therefore, equally surprised and gratified. Sending for her champion, "she thanked him with tears," and in really moving terms. "To-day," lamented the forlorn beauty, "I have neither praise, nor honour, nor friends, male or female; nor do I receive salutation or courtesy from anyone." Here there was a pause and a burst of passionate grief. Then Loba dried her eyes, or attempted to dry them; but the tears would fall in spite of her. She continued her little speech, which was much broken by irrepressible sobs: "But for all this do I feel fully repaid by your defence of me; and if you would know why I made you not, as you wished, *dreg d'amor*, it was not through preference for another—for all that they say of me is mere scandal—but in order that a period of waiting might render you the more grateful for the favour that I intended to bestow. I see, with delight, that these false reports have not shaken your affection, which—oh, believe me!—is not misplaced. I never loved, and never shall love, another. To you I give myself, body and soul—to live in your house, and in your power, and at your will—*on condition that you avenge me of mine enemies to the best of your ability.*"

Poor Loba! The last sentence of her speech explains

all. Terribly wicked it was. But then vengeance was the characteristic of the age. She only spoke as others acted. We rejoice to think that no gentleman of the nineteenth century would have taken advantage of her misery. That, however, was "the age of chivalry." Thank God that it has vanished for ever! It is the first time that we inscribe the interjection, but it is far from being the first time that our studies of the past have caused us to utter it.

Raymond de Miravals being a gentleman of the age of chivalry, he accepted Loba's offer *en bloc*, and took her to live with him, merely to abandon her a few weeks afterwards, probably with contumely—an action of which he did not fail to vaunt in a canzon specially composed for the occasion; "which," adds the narrator, alluding to both song and desertion, "was the only vengeance he could take on a woman." We record the sentence with some little pleasure: it expresses a sentiment that, in the twelfth century, was seldom uttered or acted upon beyond the domain of song, and shows, therefore, that the troubadours, with all their follies and all their vices, really did exercise an ennobling influence over their era. What became of Loba has not been stated. She was hardly the subject to be admitted by even the easy-going convents of that era, even had she been of a character to seek an asylum in one of them; and it is quite evident that she had been discarded by her relatives. Suicide was not unknown to the Provençal dames; but she was not of a character to adopt such a remedy. As to other alternatives—let us drop the veil over Loba.

"Having told you," continues the old *raconteur*, "how Raymond repaid Loba de Penautier for her treachery, I shall now tell you how he was betrayed of Adalais,

wife of Bernard de Boisasso, lord of the Castle of Lombes." The story-teller, however, while exulting in the deed of the troubadour, does not say (what the remainder of his narrative evidently shows to have been the fact) that the sad deed, though openly laughed at and applauded, nevertheless engendered in the female Provençal mind a firm resolve to grind off the sharp edges of this very choice diamond. Adalais was as fond of praise and homage as Loba herself, and, encouraging Raymond's advances, he sang her everywhere, until she became the most renowned for beauty, grace, and courtesy of all the women in that quarter. "She pretended to love Raymond, promised him *dreg d'amor*, and gave him kisses in earnest thereof. Now through the songs of Raymond was Adalais admired and sought of all the barons far and near, and she became the subject of curiosity even at the courts of Aragon and Toulouse; and the king and the count sent her messages and presents of jewels, which she willingly accepted." Nór was Raymond less pleased with this than Adalais, for he made a song, in which he congratulated her on her magnificent conquests, and himself on the possession of a mistress so attractive. He did not forget to take to himself due credit for the possession of merits which induced a beauty so much sought after to prefer him, a simple gentleman, to sovereign princes. In the course of time the King of Aragon happened to pass that way; and Raymond, obtaining an audience for the asking, according to the custom of those very easy times, entreated his Majesty to pause at Lombes, in compliment to the lady of the castle and her admirer. The king did so, to the great delight of the poet and the dame; and the latter prepared for him a sumptuous feast. "And in the course of the feast he spoke of love

to the lady, who heard him willingly. . . . . That night I know who stole in secret, while everybody else was asleep, to the royal chamber. In the morning the intrigue was known to all the members of the royal train, and, indeed, to every person in the castle. Raymond, who expected to be enriched with joy by the congratulations of the king on the many perfections of his mistress, was terribly mortified to hear the story. He quitted the castle hastily, amid the jests and laughter of the courtiers, and, going home, he made a song, in which he complained bitterly of the wrong and felony that had been done him by the pair." The song, however, had little effect. His adventure with Loba was fresh in the memory of his acquaintances. They remembered how he had vaunted of his keenness on that occasion, and, looking upon the present affair as decidedly a case of "diamond cut diamond," in which the lady had by far the better, they were unsparing in their ridicule. Raymond's friend, Uc of Mataplan, was especially severe on him, and to his serventes the subject replied as follows, in a cobbole addressed to a Catalan lady who was the mistress of Uc :—

Your lover, Madame Sancha, is
A very nice young man ;
But minding business none of his
Is not a prudent plan :

I wish him well, and therefore hope
You 'll teach him this to know—
That when a nose a-poking goes,
It often meets a blow.

Me he assails and takes to task
About a sordid dame ;
But if the crime be hers, I ask
How mine can be the shame ?

If he will couple sorry rhymes,
A better theme would be—
How Amfos knightly faith forgot,
And Adalais modesty.

The fiend of folly man and mule
At times must needs possess;
Nor can we check each frantic fool,
But castigate them—yes.

Your knight, then, punish, Sancha fair,
And I'll chastise my "mount;"
I'd whop both man and mule, but spare
The man on your account.

The foregoing is a fair example of the milder form of satire among the troubadours.

The trick played upon Raymond by Adalais of Lombes was not by any means the worst that he had to bear. One much more annoying quickly followed. In the neighbourhood of Castres dwelt the widow of a wealthy valvassour, much better known as the Beautiful Albigeoise than by her baptismal name, Ermengard. Hearing how Raymond had been treated by Adalais, she resolved to amuse herself, in like manner, at his expense. It was, however, necessary to know him in the first instance, for as yet she was not of his acquaintance. And she procured an introduction by a means not uncommon among her countrywomen. She sent to apprise Raymond that, hearing how he had been deceived by Adalais, and sympathising with him in his sense of wrong, she was willing to make him amends for all his loss and suffering by receiving him as cavalier servente. Raymond snapped greedily at the bait, betook him to the residence of the Beautiful Albigeoise, and was delighted with his reception. Then he began to praise Ermengard, and to extol her many excellent qualities in song. "But Ermengard was wise and prudent, and knew how to

distinguish between those who were her real friends and those who were not, and to deal with each as they merited." It happened, while Raymond de Miravals sued her to grant him *plazer in dreg d'amor*, that the baron, Oliver de Saissac, prayed her to become his wife. She refused to grant Raymond's request, but she admitted that she was quite ready to accept him as a husband, as she explained, "in order that their affection might never be broken, nor themselves parted"—a sentence which showed that she either knew very little or cared very little about the theory of love. Raymond was better acquainted with this theory than most people; but the widow was wealthy as well as beautiful; and, besides, it was necessary to do something in order to obliterate the memory of his last disgrace. He therefore agreed, at the suggestion of Ermengard, to get rid of his wife, as a necessary preface to the marriage. It seems that she, whose name was Gaudarenza, kept house at Miravals, while her excellent husband was roaming over the country in his double profession of troubadour and gallant. It was not that she was any better domesticated than himself, for her amusements differed little from his own. She excelled in dancing, and was, besides, a poetess; and her favourite partner in bolero and fandango, who was also the subject of her amorous lays—that is to say, her cavalier servente—was an accomplished knight of the neighbourhood, Guilhem Bremon. Raymond quitted Ermengard to hasten to Gaudarenza. "Come," said he abruptly, as his wife met him at the door, "one troubadour is quite enough for the best house that ever was built. A woman that makes verses shall no longer be my wife. You know that two of a trade, especially such a trade as ours, can never agree. The best thing you can do, then, is just to pack up your things and go home to

your relatives, for I am resolved to have nothing more to do with you." Gaudarenza was very angry at what she heard. She stamped her foot, and declared she would at once do as Raymond desired, and send for her friends to take her home. Now she had a friend, a brave and gallant cavalier, William Bremon, to whom she used to address her songs and with whom she *fazia sas dansas*. So she apprised Bremon that he must come and carry her off and make her his wife. Bremon heard the news with joy. Mustering his friends, he came with a brave troop to the castle of Miravals, and dismounted at the door. Gaudarenza saw him alight, and hastened to tell Raymond that her friends had arrived and were ready to take her away, and that she desired to go with them. Raymond rejoiced to hear this, and ordered her to apparel her for her journey, which she did with speed, while her friends waited without. And when she was ready Raymond himself led her to the door, and handed her over very gracefully and courteously, and with many compliments, to William Bremon. Then the lady's palfrey was brought forward; but before she mounted she turned to Raymond, saying that, since he meant to part with her, he ought to give her for wife to Bremon. He replied that he had no objection to do so, provided Bremon and herself were willing. Both rejoined that they were; and Bremon, producing a ring, put it on her finger, while Raymond joined their hands as husband and wife. When this was done the party rode off, with Gaudarenza, who was much pleased, in the midst. Having thus parted with his wife, Raymond hastened to Ermengard, and, informing her that he had acted according to her wish, he requested her to keep her promise. The lady said he had done well, and directed him to return to his castle, there to make preparations

for a fashionable wedding—adding that she, too, had something to arrange, and that when she was ready she would send for him. Raymond obeyed her this time also, providing all things necessary for a magnificent feast, and inviting all his friends to partake. Meanwhile, Ermengard sent for Oliver de Saissac, who came to her immediately. She told him how she had made up her mind to accede to the wish that he had so often expressed, and take him for her husband—a thing that made him the happiest man alive. That very night he carried her off to his castle, and next morning he married her, with great rejoicing and a gorgeous feast, whereat there was much company present. While Raymond de Miravals was in his castle superintending his preparations, and looking anxiously for the promised messenger, news came that the lady had wedded Oliver de Saissac. Much was he grieved and annoyed, for he had lost both wife and mistress; and, besides, all his great preparations for the feast were quite thrown away. Adalais, too, had betrayed him for the King of Aragon, as you have heard; so he lost all joy and solace and all inclination to compose and sing; and thus he remained a long time. But a gentle lady, who was the wife of Peter Rotgier of Cabaretz, and who was eager for praise and glory, sent him a message. After saluting and comforting him, she prayed that he would leave off his grief for love of her, and declared of a truth that she was prepared to go to him if he would not come to her, and would make him so much courtesy and love as would prove that she had no desire to deceive him like the others." She kept her word, restoring Raymond to joy and song. It is the last gallant adventure recorded of him.

Raymond's light and laughing life had a melancholy

conclusion. The Crusaders of De Montfort seized his castle and his lands, and drove him into exile. Here his serventes did much to rouse the King of Aragon to the aid of the people of Toulouse; but he had the misery to hear of the utter destruction of his royal friend and his gallant host under the walls of Muret. From that time forward misfortune was the constant attendant of Raymond de Miravals until he died, "poor and worn out in body and mind."

# PETER VIDAL

WE are satisfied that Peter Vidal has been confounded with his father and his son, who were troubadours as well as himself, and credited with poems * that he never wrote, and with a length of life that he did not enjoy. His was one of those ardent natures that are rapidly exhausted. All the deeds recorded of him occurred between 1185 and the close of the century, and there is good reason to believe that he died about the time of the capture of Constantinople by the Franks. We may, therefore, conclude that his birth could hardly have happened earlier than 1165.

Nobody could write more brilliantly, or act more absurdly, than Vidal. In song he had few equals; in conduct he was the creature of impulse and the slave of inordinate vanity. So addicted was he to outrageous vaunting, that it became customary to remark of every Parolles, "He lies like Peter Vidal." And yet he was so frank, so generous, so perfectly harmless, and intellectually so gifted, that he was a general favourite. We must not forget to add that he was an accomplished musician, and that he possessed an exquisite voice. His person has not been described: perhaps it is as well. In

* Vidal's father, a wealthy tanner of Toulouse, was merely an amateur singer. The third Vidal, like the second, was a professional troubadour.

the twelfth century — that is, had he been born a Provençal—Goldsmith would have been a Vidal, and in no respect did poor Noll's exterior correspond with the ideal that fancy loves to form of a favourite singer.

Vidal achieved renown with extraordinary rapidity. This was owing in some measure to the quality of his verses, but still more to his freaks. In those days practical joking was carried to an extreme that we can hardly understand ; and Vidal's character rendering him the dupe of every practical joker, we find him, from one end of his career to the other, figuring as the victim of intensely ludicrous "sells." It is thus that he makes his first appearance in story.

On the banks of the Arriege dwelt a husband so jealous and vindictive, that gallant could undertake no more perilous enterprise than to go a-wooing to the very pretty wife of Guillems of Castenet. By playing on Vidal's vanity, some of his reckless acquaintances managed to stimulate him to beard this grim old lion in his den. Making his way to Castenet, he demanded the hospitality of its lord as a troubadour. "Troubadour!" muttered Guillems, eyeing his visitor suspiciously, and summoning a score or so of serving-men ; "I'll soon prove that. Here," said he to his retainers, "carry me this fellow to the well yonder, and tie him in one of the buckets." The thing was done in a twinkling. "Now, friend," said Guillems to Vidal, "I mean to have you ducked 'twixt this and noon. By that time you must compose a song, and thus show that you really are what you say, or "—here he swore a great oath—"I cut the rope and let you go to the fiend!" The vassals turned the winch with a will, sousing Peter through some twenty feet of twilight into the water, and then lifting him all dripping until his nose reached the level of the

castle-yard. Much did the sufferer execrate and threat and splutter, and loudly did the spectators laugh. This went on for half an hour or more, until the baron became impatient. "Hallo, down there!" roared he to Vidal, who was just visible above the water; "how about that sonnet?" There was a ring of grim satisfaction in the query, for the lord of Castenet had made up his mind that his visitor was an impostor—a disguised wooer, in fact—and, therefore, fully worthy of the fate he had in store for him. Great, then, was his surprise when the following lines rolled up from the well:—

Work on, proud knight, your tyrant will!
But know that useless your abuse is;
Yon winch is not Parnassus hill,
Nor this the fountain of the Muses.

But though Pegasus were this string,
And you up yonder an Apollo,
Rather than ope my lips to sing,
Your purpose fell I'd bid you follow!

That he had made a mistake the knight was fairly convinced. Nor could he help admiring the ingenuity with which Vidal contrived to prove his claim to the title of troubadour while affecting to refuse. So he hastened to terminate the suspense of his visitor and to make amends for his harshness.* Vidal returned in high spirits to Toulouse, where he vaunted without stint, and circulated a *canzon* in which he credited himself with complete success during his visit to the jealous knight. This piece of impudence soon met with its reward. While proceeding to what he was led to believe an assignation, he fell into the hands of the offended husband; and had he been a man of solid character, it would have gone hard with him. But not even Guillems

* A story not unlike the above is told by Wood of two Oxford students

of Castenet could think seriously of slaying "such a fool as lying Peter." So, after terrifying him to any extent, the irate baron contented himself with what most people considered a very proper piece of vengeance. He slit the lying tongue with his dagger, and then dismissed its owner.

Vidal was only too glad to escape thus, for in those days mutilation was practised to a frightful extent, by the private avenger as well as by the public executioner.* Toulouse contained skilful medicos, one of whom found small difficulty in repairing the damage. But the capital of Languedoc was no longer a residence for our troubadour. His punishment was not less notorious than his offence; nobody thought it a bit too severe. He was berhymed and laughed at without mercy; and, to escape the universal ridicule, he emigrated.

We next find him attached to the household of one of the greatest of the Provençal barons—Beraldo, lord of Baux. This magnate was nearly allied to the reigning family; he possessed vast estates, held quite a court of his own, and bore the title of Viscount of Marseilles—a title, we may observe, that was little more than nominal; for the Marseilles of seven hundred years ago was substantially a republic. Beraldo, who was jovial and generous, and something of a troubadour also, was one of the many great ones who found it a pleasant thing to have jongleurs at command who could eulogise themselves and vituperate their neighbours in witty rhymes. Vidal, therefore, who was the wittiest of rhymers, became

* Not many years before a minstrel published some verses reflecting rather severely on the first monarch of the Plantagenet line. Henry hunted him vindictively from one castle to another, until he got him within his grip; he then put out his eyes. The minstrel, in despair, refused all sustenance, and died thus. His name was Luc de la Barre.

forthwith a prime favourite with Beraldo. Apartments were assigned him and valets appointed to attend him; he had a first-rate mount in the stable and an honoured seat at the board; finally, he was clad in all respects—and whether for banquet, chase, or tilt—precisely like his principal. Than the last the force of favour could no further go. To be apparelled and armed like the patron was the thing of all others most desired by the follower in the olden time. It was not, indeed, without its drawbacks. When the lord went to battle, his counterfeit presentments ran a good deal of risk, as it happened with those of Henry IV. at Shrewsbury, and with those of Richmond at Bosworth. Nor were Peter and his fellows altogether exempt from such perils. They were expected to go to war—at least as spectators—in order to be the better able to rehearse the feats of the champions. The last they sometimes did on the wrong side; like the rhyming monk who accompanied Edward II. to Bannockburn, and who, being made prisoner, had to hymn the triumph of the Bruce by way of ransom.

In his new sphere Vidal gathered glory and shame in full proportions. A principal scene of the former was the banquet-hall. There he displayed in all its brilliance his unrivalled talent as an improvisatore. It must be admitted that a mediæval banquet was precisely the thing to excite such a genius to unusual effort. And the south of France being then, perhaps, the most refined and luxurious quarter of Europe, it was there that such lords as Beraldo provided those feasts which Le Grand d'Aussy describes so well. We will suppose our readers present at such a banquet; that they have sufficiently admired the proportions of the apartment, and duly scrutinised the costumes, whose magnificence leaves

modern competition so far in the rear; that they have partaken of a thousand delicacies of which our cookery has forgotten, not merely the preparation, but the very names; that the close of the feast is approaching; that spiced wines and pastry, in artistic forms, are passing round; and that the tumblers and the minor minstrels have exhibited their respective accomplishments for the delectation of the company. A cry—just such a one as may be heard in a theatre of the present day—is now raised for an improvisation from the mighty master, Vidal. We cannot say that we care much for such off-hand things ourselves, unless when they happen, as is sometimes the case, to be of the order of Sheridan's witticisms—that is, carefully conned beforehand. Vidal was not of a character to take so much trouble; and, therefore, even his unpremeditated lyrics have no more than average merit. Such as they are, however, we feel bound to give a specimen. He obeys the call, then, rises, takes a guitar from an attendant, and runs his fingers over the strings. At the sound conversation drops, even the whispers of flirtation* cease, and all is wrapt attention. He happens to be in a satiric mood, and his song is a succession of hits, under which a good many of the guests wince very perceptibly—a thing that, perhaps, renders this effort all the more acceptable to those who escape. In one point the piece is of value —it shows that Provençal society was not so very unlike our own as some would have us think.

I hate who gives a scanty feast,
The mind where envy rankles,
A brawling monk, a smirking priest,
And the maid who shows her ankles.

* Doubtless, our readers will be glad to learn that this delightful art was already known and practised in the twelfth century.

The fool who dotes upon his wife,
The churl whose wine's diluted,
The puritan with joy at strife—
May these three be well hooted!

Deep shame befall who wears a sword
He never draws in fight,
And be the huxter's brat abhorred
Who apes the airs of knight.

Let scorn be hers who weds her groom,
And his who weds his harlot,
And may the gibbet be the doom
Of rogues that strut in scarlet!

Tumultuous applause follows; and, when this subsides, Vidal condescends to entertain the company with his last new servente. It is founded on the perilous position of the Christian kingdom in Palestine in the year 1187, just before the news of the capture of Jerusalem arrived to startle the Western world; and it is composed in reprehension of the indifference with which the European Powers regard the crisis.

Shame on the sensual German, too drunk to hear the call
That rings for help across the wave, from Salem's leaguered wall!
Shame on the Flemish burghers, a dull and sordid race,
Who ply the shuttle while the Turk defiles each holy place!
Shame on the island princes, who waste in sinful fray
The blood and gold that might have swept the pagan from his prey!

Shame on the Butcher's offspring,* the laggard in the fight,
Who arms to do his neighbour wrong, but not his faith to right.
Shame on the ancient dotard who only tells his beads,
While Saladin a mighty host against King Baldwin leads.
And shame on every singer whose verses will not aid
To rouse the chiefs of Christendom unto a new Crusade.

* Such was the origin of the Capets, according to mediæval gossip. Hugh, the first of the family, is made by Dante (*Purgatorio*, xx. 52) to describe his descent thus—

Figliuol fui d'un beccajo di Parigi.

This piece excites unqualified enthusiasm, and the applause is renewed in thunderous form. Nor is the audience content with applauding. One throws a gold chain round the poet's neck, another forces a ring on his finger, a third clasps his embroidered sword-belt round his waist, and a fourth casts his mantle over his shoulders. Few of these gifts are retained by the poet; most of them are ransomed by the givers at the close of the feast, and the remainder are entrusted, according to custom, to the safe keeping of an accommodating Hebrew or Cahorsine.

We are now compelled, with much reluctance, to notice Vidal's shame. A leading personage at the court of the viscount was his brother, Hugues de Baux. This nobleman was the prime confidant of the poet, and a very Puck in the matter of practical joking. Never before had he possessed such a glorious subject for the exercise of the accomplishment in which he excelled. He manipulated Peter with consummate dexterity, and kept him perpetually involved in ridiculous scrapes without ever forfeiting his good opinion. The troubadour was notoriously addicted to the tender passion, and of this weakness Hugues was always taking advantage. Did a pretty lady happen to smile on the one, the other was sure to be at hand to swear that she was smitten, to urge a hundred things in proof thereof, and to press his friend to take his fortune at the flood—by which Messire Hugues meant the perpetration of some unmitigated piece of lunacy. Thus the poor fellow was kept pretty constantly employed in scaling walls, hiding behind tapestry, and walking of nights under hideous disguises—to his invariable, and in most cases signal, discomfiture. It is but right to state that Hugues was not alone in his benevolent efforts to befool Vidal. The

ladies were just as much to blame. "Each of them," writes a gossiping contemporary, "said all she could to please Peter, and promised him whatever he took it into his head to ask, without the smallest intention of keeping faith." All this furnished high amusement to Beraldo and his friends, and doubtless would have continued to do so for an indefinite period, had not the inveterate joker thought fit at length to direct the amorous aspirations of the poet towards his sister-in-law, the Lady Adalais. We regret to state that the latter was quite aware of what was going forward, and that she condescended occasionally to assist in confirming her strange admirer in his folly. Vidal's eccentricities now became supreme. Intoxicated beyond expression at the thought of being preferred by a princess, he worked himself into just such a passion as Cervantes assigns to his hero—of whom, indeed, Vidal seems to us the original. There was no end to the strange tasks which Hugues imposed on the poet in the name of the lady; and from none of these tasks did the poet dream for a moment of shrinking. At length the joker disguised a fellow-scapegrace as a wizard, and introduced him to Vidal. The latter had made up his mind to employ magic in securing the affections of the viscountess, and the wizard pretended to gratify him. A great deal of preliminary mummery was performed in secret, and the dupe agreed to complete the incantation by riding an enormous boar three times round the outer wall of the castle in broad daylight. Here we may remind our readers that the twelfth century was emphatically the era of magic; an era when it was universally trusted, dreaded, and invoked, and when no absurdity recommended in its name was too gross for acceptance. It was an era, too, when—as may be gathered from the

"Decameron"—it was not at all uncommon for practical jokers, as in this instance, to deceive simpletons under magical pretences.*

Hugues took care that sufficient publicity should attend the exploit, and spectators crowded to the scene as thick as bees in swarming time. The pig was muzzled to keep it from using its tusks, and to this muzzle a string was attached—a string which Vidal grasped by way of bridle when he mounted. Here we pause a moment to admire him, which is but just, seeing that a poet on a pig is something entirely unique in literary history. That it will remain so we should not like to assert. Experience shows that the freak of a great writer is contagious. And now that we have exhibited the mediæval Vidal on a pig, there is no saying how soon the modern Vidals may not take it into their heads to exhibit themselves likewise.

The boar commenced proceedings by fixing its feet firmly in the ground and setting up an ear-splitting scream. After some twenty minutes spent thus, somebody applied a lighted brand to its tail, whereupon it dashed off at a furious pace, but in the wrong direction. The scamper was brought up by a well-filled ditch, into which master piggy plunged, bearing Vidal with him. Released from this predicament, the pair went through a variety of curious evolutions. Sometimes both were sprawling together; sometimes Vidal was sprawling alone; sometimes he was galloping after the pig; and sometimes he was galloping on it, though seldom in the right direction. The quadruped, which had manifested

* Maestro Griffolino of Arezzo paid rather dearly for such a jest. Failing to provide Albero, "figliuolo segreto" of the Bishop of Siena, with a charm which would enable him to fly, the youth complained to the Bishop, and the latter had the conjuror burnt.—*Inferno*, xxix. 109–17.

throughout a vicious propensity for dashing headlong at every obstacle in the way, at length charged a passing wain, and depositing the biped under the wheels, made its escape to a neighbouring wood, whither the disgusted Vidal did not follow it. Thus ended the oddest attempt at bewitching a pretty lady that has ever been recorded.

Before Beraldo and his family had ceased to laugh at Vidal's race, the latter was ripe for an exploit of another kind. Hugues persuaded him that, all circumstances considered, he could do no better than steal a kiss from the viscountess, and a kiss he resolved to steal. One morning, while prowling about the corridors, he saw the viscount leaving his chamber, and he—who, be it remembered, was clad in similar fashion—stole quietly in. The viscountess was in that delicious state which is neither sleeping nor waking, and in which we can shape our dreams just as we please. Kneeling by the bed, the audacious poet kissed her on the lips. "Feeling the kiss," says the old Provençal storyteller, "and thinking it was Beraldo, her husband, she raised herself on her elbow, and looking round saw—*that fool, Peter Vidal!*" Jumping out of bed, she seized him by the ears, which, as a contemporary—Raymond de Miravals—remarks, were conveniently long, and bumped his head lustily against the wall, while she made the castle ring with her shrieks. "Then," says our authority, "came the damsels of the lady, as I have heard, and asked what all the uproar was about. And while dame Adalais was explaining the matter to her handmaidens, who wondered much and loudly, Peter Vidal contrived to release his long ears and run away. Then the lady sent for her husband, and complained dolorously how Peter Vidal had kissed her. And the handmaidens complained also, speaking altogether, as is their wont, and making an ex-

ceeding great noise. But Beraldo, being a prudent man and a hearty, took the thing in jest, and began to laugh. And when he had laughed his fill, he wiped his eyes and reproved his wife, because she had made such a hubbub about the thing that the silly fellow had done. But all he could say failed to appease her, or to restrain her clamour, or the clamour of the handmaidens. Then Beraldo went out and thought no more about the thing. But dame Adalais sent messengers in all directions to arrest Vidal, and menaced him very grievously. And when Vidal heard of these threats he was sore afraid, and hastening on board ship, he fled to Genoa."

Not considering himself safe in the city of St. George, Vidal continued his flight into Lombardy. During his wanderings he composed many sonnets, in which he deplored his exile from the "light of his eyes" in very moving terms. These sonnets, however, formed only a portion of his literary labours. He addressed canzons to various Italian cities, abounding in political wisdom; and he scattered serventes over Christendom, bewailing the recent capture of Jerusalem, and recommending the Crusade then in preparation. Nor, in spite of his devotion to the viscountess, did he neglect to practise an adage in which, as versified by Moore, we are told that—

> When we are far from the lips that we love,
> We have but to make love to the lips we are near.

Thus he got up one very pretty flirtation with Donna Estefania, a lady of Turin; and another, still prettier, with Rambauda of Biolh, who was the wife of a gentleman bearing the formidable name of Rostaala. From Rambauda he received a girdle—possibly as he had received the kiss—which he carefully preserved and often displayed as a trophy.

Vidal reappeared at Genoa just as Richard of England touched at that port on his way to Palestine. Though the lion-hearted monarch had already quite a troop of minstrels in his train,* he was not the less eager to engage the world-renowned Vidal. And the latter, seeing that nothing better was likely to offer for the present, consented to accompany him. Before the fleet sailed he composed the following canzon, which he took care to transmit to Adalais :—

Thy breeze is blowing on my cheeks,
Oh land of lyre and lance:
In every gush to me it speaks
Of her I love, and France.
'Twas there I sang, and won renown;
'Twas there my heart I gave
Unto the dame whose cruel frown
Me forth an exile drave—
How pleasant every breeze that leaves
The land of lyre and lance,
How welcome every voice that weaves
A tale of Her and France!

Why for the deed it bade me dare
Could not my love atone?
And wherefore does a form so fair
So stern a spirit own?
Far better feel a Moslem blade,
Than thus despairing pine;
So on my breast the cross I'll braid,
And hie to Palestine.
Seek, song, with this my last farewell,
The land of lyre and lance;
Nor to my lady fail to tell,
I die for Her and France!

As a crusader, Vidal's versatile spirit adapted itself to

* He used these minstrels in lampooning his rivals, among the rest the Duke of Austria, who retorted in kind. So long as these two chiefs remained in Palestine their respective bards never ceased to enliven the camp with songs satirising the antagonists of their masters, which songs were sung among the tents after the manner of ballad-singers.

its surroundings with only too much facility. "Here," says one of his mediæval biographers, "he acted as madly as elsewhere. Filling his brain with chivalrous fancies, he fully believed himself a hero, and wished that others should believe it too." He soon contrived to render his new mania sufficiently conspicuous. History tells how Cœur de Lion quarrelled with the monarch of Aphrodite's favourite isle—a monarch who, by the way, was then in full and very successful rebellion against his liege lord, the Emperor Isaac Angelus. Nor does history omit to describe the victory of the Plantagenet, and how he fettered his captive with chains of silver—an honour of which the latter was hardly worthy. But neither historian nor biographer has thought it right to apprise us of the precise part taken in these events by our troubadour. Whatever that part might have been —whether he really charged with the men-at-arms, or, which is more probable, whether he merely accompanied them in fancy—Vidal did not hesitate to appropriate all the glory of the triumph in his songs. Here is a specimen of one:—

Up with the banners of Vidal!
  Loud let my trumpet be blown!
A charge I prefer to a bridal,
  And a rattling fight to a throne.
My eyes like twin comets are flashing!
  I rush as a pike in a lake!
'Mid the ranks of the foe I go smashing,
  Just like a bull through a brake.
Then up with the banners of Vidal!
                Huzzah!

I'm Arthur, Sir Launcelot, Roland—
  Yea, all the Round Table in one;
From Italy northward, to Poland,
  For fighting, like me ye'll find none.

My name causes armies to shiver
Beneath my fierce tread the earth quakes!
And the demi-god blows I deliver,
Before me each obstacle breaks.
Then sound ye the onset of Vidal!
Huzzah!

The author continues his vaunts for another stanza :— "When clad in my white hauberk, and wielding my sword, I am resistless! Alone I disarmed a hundred barons and captured as many more! Nor am I less formidable in the bower than in the battle. I woo but to win; and am the terror of the carpet-knight as well as of the seasoned warrior."

When Richard resumed his voyage to Palestine, Vidal did not accompany him. Perhaps the troubadour had seen enough of war; perhaps he had contracted a brotherhood-in-arms with one of the officers left in garrison; perhaps he was fascinated by the delightful clime, the luscious wines, and the charming women of the island. For one, or it might be for all, of these reasons he elected to remain behind. And certainly his comrades had no cause to regret his choice—that is, if they were partial to a hearty laugh. Here, as everywhere else, he became the willing dupe of the jokers, and made himself supremely ridiculous. He was introduced to a Greek woman of indifferent character, given to understand that she was the niece of the late Emperor—that man of romantic fortunes, Andronicus—and the heir of the Imperial crown, and—persuaded to marry her! Then he delighted his mischievous friends by working himself up into the full belief that he really was a sovereign prince. He assumed the style and title of emperor, and never appeared in public without having a throne and other Imperial insignia borne before him. The jokers hastened to conform to his

lunacy. They published his proclamations, they placed heralds at his disposal, they surrounded him with pomp, and they pretended to be busy in preparing for the expedition that was to depose the usurper of his rights. The amusement occasioned by this stupendous folly was not confined to Cyprus. It was told all over Christendom, and heard of with peculiar interest in Provence.

But this aside, his Provençal friends were not likely to forget him. Nor was he the man to allow himself to be readily forgotten. All through his exile he had never neglected an opportunity of keeping his name and deeds fresh in the memory of those at the court of Beraldo. Even in the midst of his dream of empire, he did not forget the preceding dream of love, but continued to compose passionate lyrics, which he transmitted to their subject, dame Adalais, by the hands of the merchants, pilgrims, and crusaders, who maintained uninterrupted communication between the East and the West. Vidal's flight had caused a vacancy at Baux which could not be filled up. Beraldo, his brother Hugues, and many another who had laughed at his oddities and delighted in his really brilliant qualities, never ceased to sue for his pardon from the indignant lady, and at length obtained it. He was immediately apprised of the event in an epistle penned by Hugues, and despatched by a special messenger. "Come back as quick as you can," advised the writer. "Your lady has forgiven you. Further, she makes you a present of the kiss you stole, and—happy man!—she promises to give you another of her own free will the first time she and you happen to meet." The closing line was a neat sample of Messire Hugues' skill in the art of fabrication, but Vidal accepted it as truth, reading and re-

reading until he became absolutely drunk with delight. His magnificent pretensions and warlike preparations were at once and completely forgotten, and he took ship for Marseilles without pausing to bid his Greek wife adieu. During the voyage he vented his feelings in a score of joyous songs, of which we subjoin a short specimen :—

Visions of beauty round me throng—
Each thought's a flower, each breath a song.
With hope my every fibre glows,
My very blood in music flows.
Her mantle Joy has round me cast,
My lady-love relents at last.

No grief has earth like that we prove
When swept in wrath from those we love ;
Nor does a bliss for mortals smile
Like that when fond hearts reconcile.
I feel the bliss—I've felt the pain:
Nor shall I tempt the last again.

The chroniclers say that Vidal met with a flattering reception at Baux; that the day of his arrival was observed as a festival; that the viscountess deigned to keep the promise that Hugues had made in her name; and that the poet was restored to all his former favours with herself and Beraldo. He did not abide long in Provence; nor during his stay there did he perpetrate any folly extravagant enough for special mention. Why he quitted Baux we are not informed, but within a few months of his return from the East we find him established on the banks of the Orbiel, in that quarter of Languedoc which is now known as the department of the Aude. Here he possessed an estate, and here he was as the centre of a crowd of poetic and frolicsome celebrities of both sexes, one of his nearest neighbours

being the knightly singer, Raymond de Miravals, whose talents, eccentricities, and ludicrous mishaps were only inferior to his own. Another neighbour was the beautiful Loba de Penautier, wife of the wealthy lord of Cabaretz; and as Vidal could not dispense with a mistress, he condescended to fall in love with Loba. He had a good deal of rivalry to encounter. The lady counted many admirers, among them being the fascinating Miravals, and the splendid Count of Foix. Peter, therefore, felt bound to distinguish himself in some way or other beyond his compeers, and, after much cogitation, he hit upon a plan thoroughly Vidalian. The name Loba meant she-wolf. So, in compliment to his mistress, Peter dubbed himself Lobs, or he-wolf, and gave out that he had been transformed into a loup-garou by the lady's charms. To carry out the idea more fully, he clothed himself in the skin of a wolf, and employed the shepherds of Cabaretz to hunt him over their hills "with hound and horn," as if he really were the wild beast that he pretended to be. The shepherds executed their part of the business with right good will, worrying him with their dogs and belabouring him with cudgels until he dropped exhausted. In this plight—covered with bruises, and incapable of moving a limb—he was laid, by his own direction, at Loba's door. She, adds the story-teller, did nothing but mock and laugh at him, while her other lover, Raymond de Miravals, immortalized the adventure, as Butler immortalized the adventures of Hudibras.

While Peter was still smarting from bruise and jibe and scorn—which were the only fruits of his freak—death deprived him of a patron and friend in Raymond V., Count of Toulouse. The troubadour displayed his grief with customary absurdity. He abandoned songs,

allowed his beard to grow, shaved the heads of himself and his servants, and cut off the manes, tails, and ears of his horses. The men of the South laughed as usual, but they could not dispense with his lyrics. No less a personage than the King of Aragon considered it his duty to visit him, in order to rouse him out of his melancholy. This the King effected, and Peter, resuming all his former self, continued to amuse and edify his countrymen for seven or eight years more. During this period he wrote so well and acted so wildly that none but his intimates could believe that Vidal the Troubadour and "Vidal the Fool" were the same individual.

The news of the capture of Byzantium by the heroes of what is called the Fourth Crusade revived his Cyprian dream of empire. The moment he was apprised of Dandola's achievement, he hurried to the Golden Horn in his usual headlong way, meaning to prefer his claims to the vacant throne. He died before he could excite the risibility of the Crusaders; but whether during the voyage or directly after landing cannot be ascertained.

Characteristic in all things, Vidal's very last composition, an unconscious satire on his whole life, was a treatise entitled, *La Manyera de Retirar sa Lengua*—the method of holding one's tongue. And his epitaph, penned by Raymond Miravals, was of a piece therewith:

Shall never more the Master's skill
  Delight the festive throng;
The fertile brain, alas! is still,
  And mute the silver tongue!

Far from the Land of Song he lies,
  Beyond the sullen wave;
A stranger's hands have closed his eyes,
  And laid him in his grave.

I'll weep that none who loved him there
  Could smooth his dying bed ;
I'll weep the loss we have to bear,
  Since such a soul is fled !

But no—the dirge I will not raise,
  Nor garb funereal don !
*The bard is living in his lays;*
  *'Tis but the fool that's gone.*

# A KNIGHTLY GROUP

THE troubadours with whom we have now to deal tenanted the northern frontier of the Langue d'Oc—that is to say, the elevated region of Central France. They were borderers and mountaineers in semi-barbarous times, as well as poets and men of the South. They were, therefore, always in extremes for good or for evil —always displaying that singular mixture of high heroism and unscrupulousness, of magnanimity and meanness, of cunning and recklessness, of brutish vice and sordidness, of cruelty and vindictiveness—in short, always manifesting that servility to every impulse, and that perfect capacity for adapting themselves to every circumstance, which invariably distinguishes your noble savage, as exemplified in Ali Tapelen, Djezzar Pacha, and, in fact, every chief that rises to eminence among predatory tribes.

The first care of the baron of Auvergne or the Limousin was to possess a stronghold. For the site he selected, if possible, such a situation as that whereon Richard I. erected his chateau Gaillard, an eminence projecting from the neighbouring hills, and connected with them by means of a narrow neck in which a deep ditch was always excavated. The sides of the cliff were scarped by art where nature had not already performed the task; and if the area was insufficient, means

were taken to extend it, as at the castles of Clisson and Chinon. In both cases huge walls of masonry, built up from the valley below to a level with the top of the cliff, furnished the additional space required. Upon such a site, and sheer from the edge of the precipice, rose the outer wall of the baronial stronghold to the height of some forty feet; and this wall was studded with massive round towers of at least double the altitude. Within the circuit, and commanding the entrance thereto, stood the donjon, which, during the twelfth century, was, for the most part, a gigantic round tower. The most imposing specimen of these circular donjons was that of Coucy. The wall was 190 feet in height and 34 feet in thickness, and it inclosed an area 100 feet in diameter. It was divided into four stories, of which the topmost, containing the state apartments, was the only one possessing windows. There was a staircase piercing the wall on one side, and a well-like funnel, running from top to bottom, on the other, both of which communicated with the various floors. On the uses of the former we need not dwell; those of the latter we leave to imagination. The lower story was pierced by a well penetrating the rock to the depth of a hundred yards. Around the court were placed the stables, the lodgings of the garrison, and apartments destined to shelter the tenantry in time of war, or those guests who could not find accommodation within the keep in time of peace. If we reduce the height of the donjon, the thickness of the wall, and the diameter of the area, enclosed thereby at Coucy by one-half, the description will apply generally to the castles of the period.

On each side of the donjon stood a detached tower. One of these was the windmill, and the other bore the various names of oubliette, devil-tower, tower of famine,

&c. The latter terrible building was entered by a door placed high up in the wall, access to which was obtained by means of a narrow drawbridge reaching from the second or third story of the donjon. From the door to the roof the devil-tower was a succession of cells. Downwards the arrangement varied. Sometimes the lower portion was merely a hollow shaft, into which those condemned to be forgotten were cast, living or dead, according to their crime or the temper of their judges. Sometimes a succession of cells dived downwards to the foundation, increasing in horror as they descended. The lowest vault of such a pandemonium, that of Eck, standing on the banks of the Upper Danube, being opened, a few years back, the floor was seen to be covered with decaying skeletons, while on a mouldering chair in a corner sat a figure which crumbled into dust when it was approached. Eck was a German fortress, but the lowest of its prison-cells had many rivals farther west.

Very frequently the lowest deep of the prison-tower, like Milton's Hell, was but the entrance to a lower and even more fearful abyss, the real oubliette. Such a one has been thus vividly described by Mr. T. A. Trollope, in his book, "Filippo Strozzi:"—"The interior of the tower of Volterra is reached by a drawbridge communicating with other buildings which gives entrance through a small door on the second story of the prison. From the entrance a narrow stairs ascends to the upper stories and descends to those below. The lowest is a horrible den, occupying the entire interior of the tower, vaulted in the form of a dome, and lighted only by one round hole, about the size of a man's head, which pierces a thickness of wall of some twenty to thirty feet. The effect is that the chamber is perfectly dark, with one

glaring eye of light staring into its impenetrable blackness. It might have been supposed that these arrangements would have sufficed, But a diabolical ingenuity has devised the means of adding fearfully to the torments of the captives consigned to this horrible place, by excavating a profound pit in the centre of the dungeon, so large as to leave only a pathway some five or six feet in width between the wall and the utterly unprotected edge of the abyss. By this fiendish invention the prisoner was, in the profound darkness, compelled to limit his locomotion to a mill-horse like circuit around the wall, with which he was obliged to be continually in contact, if he would avoid the danger of falling into the unknown depth below. It is a piteous thing to mark the deep-worn trace of miserable feet around this gangway between the wall and the pit, to note the polishing which shrinking shoulders, in nervous dread of the hidden chasm, have imparted to the stones, and, above all, to observe the deep marks that have been worn in the marble at the solitary eye-hole by the leaning there of captives, tantalizing themselves during the long, long hours with this far off glimpse of the light of the sun."

The mere pit, however, fearful as it was, was not all. There were instances not a few in which cruel invention contrived to add to its terrors. At the bottom of one many yards in depth—that of Baden-Baden—there were found, not many years ago, fragments of ponderous wheels set round with rusty knives, to the blades of which portions of bones, rags, and torn garments were still adhering.

Besides the oubliette every well constituted feudal castle had its torture-chamber, "built with funnel-shaped walls, contracting upwards, in the manner of a glass-house," as at Avignon, or deftly lined, with the

same purpose—that is, to stifle the cries of the sufferers. These torture-chambers were well provided with suitable engines, the favourite at the period of which we write being termed the catasta. This was an iron grating, seven feet long and thirty inches wide, which was raised about three feet from the ground, on stone supports. Thereon the victim was bound at full length, and one or more charcoal fires were lighted beneath him. It was more frequently used, in the twelfth century, as a means of extortion than as an instrument for wrenching forth a confession of guilt. Thibault the Fifth, Count of Blois, coveting the castle of Chaumont, seized the lord thereof by treachery, and tortured him on the catasta until the victim signified his willingness to yield the fortress. But the chatelain in command refused to surrender his trust at the order of a captive; and Thibault continued to roast the lord of Chaumont until he slew him. Similarly the poetic barons of the Limousin seized a staunch supporter of Cœur de Lion, the Archbishop of Bordeaux, and tormented him until he paid an enormous ransom. Concerning the uses of the catasta we shall have occasion to say a little more presently.

Possessed of a stronghold, the next care of the baron of Limousin or Auvergne was to be magnificently arrayed in war and peace. Splendid weapons, fine horses, and gorgeous apparel were sought by them as passionately as by all semi-barbarous chiefs. Heavy knobs of gold and silver, interspersed with jewels, glittered everywhere on their persons and on the caparisons of their horses. Their women, too, were equally splendid. Like those of the men, their robes gleamed with "barbaric pearls and gold." A singular instance of the magnificence of female dress in the twelfth century is

given in the account of the burial of Henry II. When this monarch expired, his corpse was treated by his servants—precisely as that of William the Conqueror had been treated a century before. They abandoned him in a body, but not until they had stripped the house of all that was valuable, including the garments of the dead. Henry's burial was the work of strangers, who, wishing to give the ceremony a semblance of royalty, circled the king's head with a diadem formed out of the embroidered hem of a lady's petticoat.

Perhaps the most significant illustrations of the sumptuous habits of the great in the twelfth century are furnished by the denunciations of such things among the clergy which were penned by the Puritans of the body. St. Damian complains of the dignitaries of the Church as scenting their vases with Indian perfumes, cooling their wine in crystal vessels, covering their walls with admirably woven hangings and their seats with pictured tapestry, sleeping on carved bedsteads and beneath coverlets of many dyes, wearing costly furs, and delighting in high-stepping horses, in rings set with pearls, and in wands glittering with gold and gems. With respect to all these luxuries, we have to observe that priests are but men, and that, in point of dress, &c., they will always maintain an equality with the class to which they belong. We close our remarks on the dresses of this period with an extract from Saba Malaspina, an early Italian annalist, who, it ought to be stated, is here describing the triumphal entry into Rome of young Conradin, when on his way to the field of his ruin:—"In honour of the occasion the Romans, male and female, slung all their finery to ropes, which they stretched across the streets. These ropes were ornamented, not with laurel leaves or green branches, but

with valuable garments and many sorts of furs. Thereto, also, were fastened waist-belts, bracelets, gold chains, bunches of rings, jewelled necklaces, buckles, silks, curiously-woven coverlets, purple hangings, and table-cloths, fine linen interwoven with silk and gold, gilded mantles, &c."

Next to dressing, the mediæval baron thought of eating. It is a subject—perhaps the only one connected with the middle ages—concerning which we never felt any enthusiasm. To others, therefore, we leave the task of recounting the thousand dishes and the recondite dainties which loaded the baronial table six or seven hundred years ago. Neither shall we attempt to discuss the more usual sports and pastimes of that far-back era: its chases, hawkings, tiltings, &c., have been dwelt upon more than sufficiently already. Be it ours to sketch, in a homely way, what might, could, would, or should have been the sayings and doings of the hall of the knightly troubadour on an evening late on in autumn. The members of the family are gathered round the fire. "The room is covered with mats," says Amerien des Escas, "and at intervals the party drink deep draughts of old wine." "Some," says Arnaud de Marsaus, "play chess or draughts; others sing songs or tell old tales." "They discourse with mirth and pleasantry," says Vidal; "and there is not one present, be he gentleman, squire, or page, who is not as familiar as a tamed bird." They talk of courtly usages, warlike feats, and the temper of weapons. After numerous tales of elf-forged blades, they discuss the estimation in which a knight should hold a trusty one. "Once upon a time," says an ancient warrior, "a cutler of Beauvais exhausted all his skill upon a sword. Having shaped, poised, and tempered it to his satisfaction, he betook him to the ducal court

at Falaise, and presented this specimen of his handiwork to Robert the Devil. The latter proved its qualities on the instant, shredding pieces from the waving tapestry, smiting off the head of an ass that stood in the court with its load of wood, and cleaving in two sundry ancient helms and hauberks, without turning the edge of the steel. 'A glorious weapon! a splendid weapon! The sword for a warrior!' exclaimed the duke, pressing hilt and blade to his lips, and ordering a reward to be given to the maker at every interjection. First came a purse containing a hundred pieces of gold; this was followed by a war-horse, richly caparisoned; and the latter, again, by a complete suit of ducal robes, including all the usual ornaments. 'Hum!' said the cutler; 'the duke is mad or full of wine. No sane man would give all these for the best sword under the sun. I shall be off before he recovers his senses and resumes his gifts.' So saying, the citizen of Beauvais made a bundle of the raiment, pocketed the purse, and, mounting the horse, disappeared in a twinkling. Hardly was he out of sight than a squire came in search of him with still another reward—the duke's own goblet—a vessel of gold of the richest workmanship. Not finding the cutler, the squire returned the goblet to his master. 'What a fool he was to go so soon!' ejaculated the duke. 'Had he waited but a little longer, I would assuredly have enriched him.' 'But it is only a sword,' suggested some of the counsellors of the duchy. 'Only a sword!' retorted Robert: 'know ye not that a good sword in the hands of a Norman duke is worth a kingdom?'"

From weapons the conversation turns to strong arms. The chaplain has a tale to tell of what he saw in Italy. "There," says he, "I once met a Catanian, one Galeazzo,

who was also called Bardisano. He was taller than other men by the head and shoulders, and he was so large and so well proportioned of limb, that it seemed as if nature had wrought with all her force to produce a model of manhood. His strength and his agility were alike unequalled. None like him could jump, hurl the stone, or cast the lance; and he was as valiant as strong. He was equally at home on horseback and on foot, and undaunted in perils. Among other proofs of his manhood were these:—One day, being fully clothed in mail, and holding his lance in his right hand, he placed his left hand on the saddle and sprang into the seat at a single bound. He could stop a horse in full career by the pressure of his knees, and he could lift an ass, with its burden of wood, and carry it on his shoulders. Fighting one day against two stout men, he knocked one down and knelt on him, thus holding him helpless, until he had vanquished the other. Then he tied both their hands behind their backs, and marched them before him in triumph. Afterwards, being at a certain siege, he was assailed by three light horsemen at the same instant. One he struck dead to the ground, a second he flung out of his saddle, and to the third he dealt such a blow with his fist that the man turned and fled at full speed. Four times did he combat in the lists—twice in France and as often in Italy—and always gained the victory."*

The foregoing story brings forth others wherein the fabulous predominates, and from giants the conversation diverges to giant-slayers and aids to strength. "There are secrets," says the veteran seneschal, "whereby a man may transfer to himself the strength of any beast

* Fazello. Storia de Sicilia, Dec. I., lib. iii., cap. I.

so long as he may need it. One at least of these is well known in Bretagne. There you may often see bulls and horses fall prostrate in their stalls, and remain without motion for a certain space. Afterwards they recover their strength, and spring to life as suddenly as they had fallen. It is because some peasant had borrowed their strength during a wrestling-match. I have myself wrestled in my youth with a diminutive Breton who flung me every time with the greatest ease. He did the same with three of my comrades. We afterwards found that he had borrowed for the occasion the strength of two horses and one bull." The company in general blame such dark practices: all prefer defeat to victory won by illegitimate means. Among such means was not reckoned feeding on pork, which in that old day was considered by far the most strengthening species of diet. "Galen recommends it," says a friar, who is also a leech. "To its use, too, Petronius and Juvenal attribute the triumphs of the Roman armies, which, as Pliny relates, fed thereon for ages by preference." "Such food, however, has its dangers," replies a guest: "it is well known to be a main cause of leprosy." This is agreed to; and leper stories go round, involving a good many scandals; for, the Church allowing divorce when husband or wife was afflicted with the disease, the result was a good deal of villany and licentiousness. Instances, indeed, occurred in all directions of persons abandoning several mates under the pretence that they were lepers—facts which show that, in the olden time, the disease was just as likely to result from the unfortunate choice of a spouse as from over-addiction to pork-eating.

Of course the evening could not close without a discussion on the chase, and on the rival merits of hawking and hunting. Herein especially the ladies are qualified

to take part.* Perhaps it was in view of such a conversation that Guillaume Cretin wrote his poem entitled "A Dispute between two Ladies respecting the Sports of Dogs and Birds," and that Gace de la Vigne wrote another on "The Results of the Chase," containing not less than ten thousand lines. Both poets prefer hawking to coursing, and sum up their arguments in favour of the former much as follows:—"It communicates pleasure to dames, queens, princesses, &c., who can take part in all the diversions of falconry, and carry the hawk, without giving occasion to scandal; while at the chase propriety confines them to the broad paths and to the company of their attendants, and thus prevents them from sharing in the deeper excitements and intenser pleasures." In that curious old book, "Le Roi Modus," a similar dispute between two dames is referred to the Count of Tancarville, who decides in favour of hunting, "since at one and the same time it pleases the ear and the eye, while hawking pleases only the eye." A still greater authority —Gaston Phœbus of Foix, whose sudden death is ascribed to over-exertion in hunting—considered that both sports were of equal merit. He held field amusements in general in the highest estimation, maintaining (Liure de Gaston Phœbus) that therein lay the straight course to paradise, because by their means great lords thrust aside idleness, which is the mother of all the vices.

In the midst of the desultory conversation the arrival of a troubadour of note is announced, and the whole apartment is at once in commotion. The call of the postman at the country seat of a keen politician is the nearest approach to such an event in modern times. For says Thierry: "In the twelfth century the songs

* See the Sporting Tracts of the Prioress Juliana Berners, printed in folio, at St. Albans, 1486.

of the troubadours, circulating rapidly from castle to castle, and from town to town, supplied the place of periodical gazettes in all the country between the rivers Isère and Vienne, the mountains of Auvergne and the two seas." "There was neither peace nor war, nor revolt nor negotiation, which was not announced and criticised in rhyme." The serventes of Bertrand Von Born, the Dauphin of Auvergne, Savari de Mauleon, and other established poets, were so many leading articles, as eagerly looked for as, and even more intently studied than those of the *Times*. But the troubadour was far more welcome than the postman. Within his single person he included the circulating library, the opera, &c., as well as the newspaper and the letter-box. The period of his arrival, however, is late, and, as we know already all that he is likely to say and do, we shall allow him to retire for the night with the other tenants of the castle. The sleeping-draught then is passed round in a massive goblet, usually of silver, and richly chased, and the company breaks up. The persons of highest rank recline on couches, with sheets of silk and coverlets of fur, as appears from an Italian poet of the period, Folgore da San Gimignano. Occasionally the coverlet is of silk, stuffed with wool and hair. Thus it is told of Henry II. that, being at Chinon in 1167, and informed of some exasperating piece of insolence on the part of Becket, he cast the silken coverlet of his bed on the floor, rolled on it in a paroxysm of fury, and tore therefrom with his teeth, pieces of the wool and hair wherewith it was stuffed. As for the bedstead, besides being carved and otherwise ornamented, it has attached to it several plumes of the partridge, which are supposed to bring long life to the sleeper.

Next day the baron indulges in a favourite pastime;

he has made up his mind "aller à la proie," which means that he intends to replenish his exhausted purse by robbing on the high road. The thing is common, Cardinal de Vitry devotes a whole chapter of his Occidental History to "the robberies and exactions committed by the great lords and their satellites." "They play the thief," writes he; "they exercise the trade of brigand; they attack the passengers on the road, sparing neither priest nor pilgrim; they are pirates at sea, where they pillage the merchants, burn the ships, and slay or drown crews and passengers; they respect not even the Church, plundering the sanctuary of the holiest objects." Nor does the Cardinal write at random. In our notice of Rambaud of Vaquieras we have mentioned the plundering achievements of the Prince of Orange and of the Marquis of Malespina; and there were scores of men of the highest rank who did likewise. "Thierry was King of France," says a chronicler, "and his brother Robert was Duke of Burgundy, while Eudes, the third brother, possessed neither lands nor powers, and lived, therefore, by violence and robbery." Philip I. and a favourite counsellor actually attempted to plunder the wealthy shrine of St. Germain en Près, and were only prevented by what the story-teller terms a miracle. Gregory VII. accuses the same king of acting as a robber-chief. "Merchants of various countries," writes the indignant Pope, "being on their way to one of the French fairs, were intercepted by the king himself, and robbed of a large sum of money." Speaking of the vassal lords of this model king, Gregory says: "They seize even the pilgrims on their way to Rome, and, plunging them into cells, subject them to horrid torture (the catasta) in order to compel them to pay exorbitent ransoms." In 1197

Eudes, Duke of Burgundy, laid an ambuscade for Anselm Archibishop of Canterbury, who was then travelling through his territories on his way to Lyons, meaning to plunder him. Eudes caught the archbishop, but was intimidated by the bold bearing of his prisoner, and let him go. Hugues de Pomponne, chatelain of the fortress of Gournay for his father, robbed the merchants who passed his hold, whether by land or by water. Having carried off a body of traders from the royal road and immured them in his cells, he was besieged by the eldest son of the king, who took the castle, in spite of the armed opposition of the Count of Champagne. In 1148 Thibault, Count of Blois, complained to the primate, Suger, that the Viscount of Sens and his son Garin had stopped certain merchants on the king's highway, and stolen from them 700 livres. In 1109 the young lord of Rocheguyon was murdered by his own brother-in-law, under circumstances of unusual atrocity. In praising his virtues one of the chroniclers of St Denis says: "His father and his grandfather rendered themselves notorious for brigandage; and though, so far, he himself had shown no inclination to robbery or theft, perhaps he might have fallen into the habits of his sires had he lived much longer." To such an extent, indeed did the habit prevail that a Duchess of Angers held the tower of Montleheri with a body of cut-throats, at the head of whom she rode on predatory expeditions, which kept the country for leages round in mortal terror. The northern border of the Langue d'Oc was, more than any other land—not excepting even Rhineland—infested by bandit nobles. It was there that, finding all other measures ineffectual, the clergy resolved, in a council held at Limoges (1035), to try the effects of the interdict, as a restraint on highway robbers of lofty rank. We

shall not accompany our poetic and free-handed warrior to the *proie;* neither shall we attempt to picture his doings with his captives. If our readers will suppose a certain scene in "Ivanhoe" uninterrupted by the opening of the siege of Torquilstone, the thing will be unnecessary.

War, however, is the business in life of the border troubadour. He likes it for its excitement; but he likes it still more for the opportunities which it affords him of gratifying his darling propensities. Under its cover he can take vengeance on his feudal foes; he can plunder their lands to any extent; he can slaughter their vassals, and he can carry off their wives and their daughters, without fear of being called to account. For the chivalrous singer of the Langue d'Oc is a shrewd calculator of chances; he knows how to change sides at the right time; he is not burdened with those honourable scruples which tie a modern gentleman to the party which he has chosen, and all the more firmly in defeat; and he has always wit enough to devise a plausible excuse for the trick known and detested in a country not very distant, and which has suffered much therefrom, as "turning one's coat." Above all, your noble troubadour prefers what is called "civil" war, and never does he neglect an opportunity of provoking it.

Preeminent in his capacity for raising storms was the renowned Bertrand Von Born. He is one of the many whose abilities have been exceedingly overrated, and by posterity as well as by his contemporaries. As a destroyer he was consummate. But, we submit, the power of destruction is not a great quality. It is universal—possessed by idiots and children, and even by the lowest reptiles. A miserable snake can destroy the life which God alone has power to give; and the veriest scoundrel that ever trod the earth may sap the social,

religious, or political system whose construction has employed all the energies of a succession of the best and noblest brains. The power of creating and regulating—the really great and godlike attribute—is confined to the few; and amongst thesefew Bertrand Von Born must not be numbered.

Von Born first distinguished himself in a family dispute. According to the custom of the time and the country, his father, at his death, divided the lands and the castle of Hautefort, seven leagues east of Perigueux, between Bertrand and his brother Constantine. Bertrand, however, would be content with nothing less than the whole; and he bullied and persecuted his brother into signing a formal renunciation of his portion. The moment Constantine was safe out of the clutches of the tyrant he proclaimed the wrong that had been done him, and repudiated the agreement. Public sympathy was altogether in his favour, and he found many powerful supporters. Bertrand did not attempt to deny his acts, nor even to excuse them. On the contrary, he exulted therein, and actually had the audacity to publish a servente to the following effect:—

Back from my lands, if your safety ye prize!
Whoever invades them, I'll tear out his eyes.
My law is, to fear not—all others I slight.
Peace!—I detest it: in war I delight.
I heed not the obstacles craven hearts raise—
Their "truces of God," and their unlucky days.
Never by me shall an hour be rejected
When fame may be gathered or vengeance inflicted.
For wealth and enjoyment let some give their labours;
My treasures are war-horses, helmets, and sabres.
Then back from my lands, if ye're prudent, my foes!
Back! I say. Here ye get nothing but blows!
Hautefort I'll hold, let who will be right:
Come on who gainsay it—I'm ready for fight.

Or taking only the general ideas :—

In peace let cowards rust away,
And childlike rule and law obey ;
But I, who never yet knew fear,
Will draw the sword and hurl the spear,
And crush the weaker in the dust,
Nor check my course save when I must.

I reck not what the churchman says ;
I care not for your lucky days.
To me all seasons are alike,
My friends to aid, my foes to strike.
One crime alone is known to me—
Neglected opportunity.

Other composition of the same kind followed. Nor did Bertrand rely on his songs alone. He gathered soldiers, and met the supporters of his brother in arms. He harassed them with forays, ambuscades, and night attacks ; he dazzled them with daring actions ; he sternly disputed every inch of ground with them. And while thus valiant, skilful, and indefatigable in the field, he was just as indefatigable and skilful, and even more daring, in the cabinet. He knew the characters of his opponents to the bottom ; he was perfectly acquainted with their loves and their hates ; he knew where scruple ended in them, and the precise point whereat the meaner passions began to sway them ; and he made such admirable use of his knowledge that within a week the confederacy against him was ready to fall to pieces. By this time, too, public opinion had veered completely round. The rapacity and tyranny of Bertrand were forgotten in the admiration excited by his dashing ability. Then he was the weaker party—one opposed to many. And, besides—as he took good care to inform the whole country in slashing rhyme—not one of those who sought his ruin had been so remarkable for fraternal

or filial affection as to assume, with any show of justice, the part of vindicator of outraged virtue. The war brought nothing but renown to Bertrand Von Born ; and the peace that quickly followed left him not only lord of Hauteforte and its lands, but by far the most distinguished and influential man of the Langue d'Oc.

The war between the Von Borns was a fair sample of those waged by the barons of the South. Brothers contended with brothers, cousins with cousins, and fathers with sons, in similar or far more insignificant quarrels, many of which originated like the following :— Among the vassals of the princely Dauphin of Auvergne were two brothers, Austros and Peyre de Maenzac. They were joint heirs of the family estate, which was not a large one, and came to an agreement by which Austros was to keep the lands, while Peyre was to try his fortune in the world as a troubadour. It was, as we have already mentioned, a common course in such cases; and here, as elsewhere, it is probable that he who selected vagabondage received a handsome sum for outfit. Peyre prospered as a singer. Ere long he attached himself closely to the household, and still more closely to the wife, of a wealthy baron, Bernard de Tiersac. An event not usual among the troubadours followed: the lady and the cavalier servente eloped together. Peyre led his prize to Auvergne, whither he was quickly followed by the outraged husband, at the head of a large band. To their assailants the knights of Maenzac could oppose no adequate resistance. Peyre, therefore, applied to his feudal superior, the Dauphin, for aid, and received it. The gallant prince summoned his vassals, and drove back De Tiersac and his friends. Nor was this all. Having won the victory, he presented the Provençal Paris with a stronghold wherein to secure

his Helen, and an estate wherewith to support her. Nor could all the remonstrances or threats of the Church induce him to withdraw his protection from the adulterers, who spent the remainder of their lives together.

This Dauphin of Auvergne was of a character common in the Langue d'Oc. High-bred and gifted with brilliant talents, vain, valiant, and selfish, he could, and often did, surpass all his contemporaries in daring, generosity, and meanness. He is thus described by Crescembini, whose lines sum up all that has been said of him by the Provençal gossips:—"He was one of the most learned, courteous, liberal, and valiant cavaliers of his time, and beyond all belief accomplished and famous in arms and in love. He greatly loved the poets, and did them much good; and he was himself excellent in Proven al poetry, and had no equal in eloquence. In the prime of life he was prodigal to excess: his profusion went so far that it lost him the half, and even more, of his possessions. But, seeing the necessity of reformation, he adopted a manner of living so strict, and even penurious, that he not only recovered all that he had lost, but became much more wealthy than he had ever been before." The Dauphin of Auvergne was evidently the Byron of his day. The latter, be it remembered, could fling away thousands ostentatiously in a night, or make a bet to live upon fifty pounds a-year—and win it, too, had there been any to take it.

In one of the longer pieces of Vidal—his Jongleur's Story—there occurs a sketch of the Dauphin and his court:—"Chance conducted me one day to Montferraud, to the Dauphin of Auvergne. Never was there a more agreeable court than this one. There I found a brilliant company; nor was there one among them—dame, lord,

knight, or squire, who was not as familiar as a little bird which is fed out of the hand. Christmas—termed in this country the Calend—was at hand. When the company rose from table they took seats round the hearth, and the knights and the troubadours conversed with mirth and gaiety. After much amusement the gentlemen rose and retired without speaking; but my lord and I remained sitting, and continued the conversation" in which, we may add, the former played the part of moralist, comparing the present with the past, in the usual strain. Nor does Vidal in this piece give an unfaithful picture of the Dauphin. On the troubadours depended the renown of the barons of the Langue d'Oc; and of the troubadours, therefore, the Dauphin was the uniform and unhesitating patron. From him they—or rather the more distinguished of them—could always obtain lands, rents, and knighthood, like Perdigon, or effectual aid in war, like Peyre de Maenzac.

The Dauphin did not shine so brilliantly in love, as he did in war and in song. Among his many mistresses there was one named Marrina, who was endowed with a very unromantic liking for eggs and bacon. Once upon a time she happened to fall short of the latter commodity, and, being unwilling to forego her usual breakfast for any length, she applied to her lover for a supply of the thing needful. And he very illiberally directed his steward to give her just half of that for which she sued—a flitch of bacon. The story circulated far and wide, and everybody blamed the meanness of the Dauphin. The half flitch of bacon figured in endless canzons, decidedly the sharpest of which was penned by the Dauphin's cousin, the Bishop of Clermont. The bishop, however, had his faults, and the Dauphin was just the man to gibbet them to all time. Out came a

sonorous servente, in which the prelate was charged with just such a double-headed crime as David perpetrated against Uriah. The subject of the said servente retorted in kind, and received a still heavier castigation. Nor did anybody pity him; for the Dauphin had the skill, which the bishop lacked, of keeping the mob on his side.

Even more characteristic of the Dauphin than the foregoing anecdote, is one told of his intrigue with one of the gay daughters of the Viscount of Turenne. This young lady, taking a liberty not usual, at least at this period, in the Langue d'Oc, procured a cavalier servente while she was yet under her father's roof, and unprovided with a husband. This cavalier was the Dauphin, who, during his courtship, made an acquaintance—that of Peyre Pelissier, the steward of the viscount—which he turned to account in his own way. The steward was a plebeian, remarkable for valour, wealth, ability, and integrity—that is, as integrity was then understood. His integrity, however, did not prevent him from becoming the confident of the lovers, and aiding them in every way. From Pelissier the Dauphin borrowed large sums of money, time after time, promising, of course, to repay him. The liaison coming to an end, and the Dauphin discontinuing his visits, the creditor thought it time to demand his money. But, unfortunately for him, he had neither document nor witness to produce in evidence, and the Dauphin, therefore, could safely deny, as he did, that he owed him a penny. In his wrath, Pelissier had recourse to the only remedy open to him. He published his wrong in a servente, which, whatever might have been thought of it seven hundred years ago, is not now worth reproduction. The debtor replied as audaciously as Bertrand Von Born replied to his brother Constantine. He sneered at the low birth of his as-

sailant, he scoffed at his folly in lending without security, and he recommended him to repair his shattered fortunes by taking to the road as a pilgrim or a blind beggar. In short, he treated the rascality as a good jest; and so, doubtless, did his high-born contemporaries.

The loves of the Dauphin of Auvergne, if received as a sample of Provençal manners, do no credit thereto; and neither did those of Bertrand Von Born. The latter sang and flirted with many ladies, among whom was Helena, the sister of Cœur de Lion. The passion of his life, however, was that which he entertained for Maenz de Montagnac, one of the daughters of the Viscount de Turenne, and the wife of one of the Tallyrands de Perigord. Such a man could not be regarded with weak feelings, and Maenz seems to have been passionately devoted to him. He, however, was far too brilliant a character to remain unsought by the forward beauties of the South. Like Rambaud of Orange, he was wooed in song by half a dozen Sapphos, the chief of whom was Guiscarda, wife of the Viscount of Comborn. Flattered by such a preference, Bertrand forgot his faith, and quarrelled with Maenz, but speedily repented, and sought for pardon in the following verses:—

I merit not the censure, unfounded is the blame:
On that account to banish me were verily a shame.
May the wild falcon seize my hawk, and rend it to my face,
If I prefer not hope of you unto another's grace.

May I be bound upon a mule, and ignominious led,
While showers the hooting rabble filth and offal on my head;
May I be doomed in winter's depth at a vile inn to bide,
With surly host and sorry fare—if I am not belied.

My lady will not pardon; what shall I do or dare?
To justify me in her eyes, what shall I say or swear?
What castle burn? what baron take? what deed of daring do
Shall I perform to prove that I am ever staunch and true?

May the wind fail me when at sea ! and when to court I fare
May all the ribalds cudgel me as though a clown I were ! *
May I be seen when battle joins to turn my rein, and fly—
If my accuser has not said a foul and groundless lie !

He meant it to be understood that his flirtation with the lady of Comborn had been one of those trifles which were allowed, and, indeed, advised, by the Courts of Love, as the best possible means of stimulating a flagging passion into renewed ardour. Maenz, however, was not to be regained by even these verses, and Bernard was compelled to adopt another, but still a usual course. In the neighbourhood dwelt a celebrated beauty and poetess, Tiburza de Montausier, who was then widowed of husbands for the second time, and of gallants for perhaps the twentieth. To Tiburza Bertrand offered the vacancy which Maenz had left in his heart. But Tiburza had very troubadourlike ideas of propriety, and so made this reply :—"If there is any probability of reconciling you and Maenz, the thing shall be done by me. If you have wronged her, and she prove unwilling to receive you again, neither will I receive you. But if I cannot reconcile you two, yet find withal that you are not solely to blame, then shall I be happy to accept such a knight as yourself for my cavalier servente." Bertrand agreeing to this, Tiburza set about the reconciliation with perfect sincerity, and soon effected it. There was no recurrence of the quarrel. At a later period, indeed, Bertrand was in some apprehension of seeing his beauty won from him by one or other of a crowd of celebrated wooers, which included

* An allusion is here made to the very singular body of life guards instituted by Philip Augustus. See *Cornhill Magazine*, January, 1868.

Cœur de Lion. In this emergency he adopted a plan recommended by Rambaud of Orange. He wrote a servente, in which he represented Maenz as a monster of depravity, and thus drove away her admirers! How Maenz liked the trick the gossips have not told. But as she continued faithful to her maligner, it is probable that the head, of whose strength he was so proud, furnished him with an excuse for his conduct which she considered satisfactory.

It is chiefly as a demon of discord, as a firebrand of war, that Bertrand is known to history. From one end of France to the other he was renowned, dreaded, and courted; and by princes and kings as well as by his equals. With whomsoever he was brought in contact, over that person did he acquire the most extraordinary influence—an influence which he never employed except for evil. He was the leader of the barons of the March, and he kept them perpetually employed in private feuds or in foreign hostilities. One after another he was the friend and counsellor of each of the sons of Henry II. of England; and so long as they lived, he contrived to fling them in ceaseless strife against their sire, or against one another. Even that cool and wary statesman, Philip Augustus, was, to some extent, the plaything of the wily troubadour, being driven at times, by his sneers and taunts, into a course of action of which his better sense completely disapproved. But to do adequate justice to Bertrand's feats of mischief would require volumes, and we have but a few pages at command. We must, therefore, content ourselves with a general glance at his career.

In 1173 began that contest between Henry II. and his children which ceased not so long as any remained to continue it. Sometimes all the sons were banded

against the sire; sometimes these sons were arrayed against each other; and sometimes the father and one son contended against the other sons. Truces were made only to be broken, and sides taken just to be deserted. And inciting to treacherous breach of truce, or still more treacherous change of sides, the incarnate demon, Bertrand Von Born, was always to be found. It was his interest to act this diabolical part, for while the war lasted his "strong head" rendered him the real king of the South, while in peace he was nothing but a third-rate baron. On one occasion young Henry, already a crowned king, making peace with the elder Henry, and abandoning his territories to his brother Richard in exchange for a fixed income, left the scene of war to take up his residence at the court of France. It was a heavy stroke for the barons, to whom his presence had given the semblance of right, and they resented his desertion accordingly. Heretofore he had been the brother in arms and song of Bertrand, the two singing each other, according to a fashion then prevalent, under the name of "Mariner." But no sooner did Von Born hear of the youth's defection than he forgot all feelings of brotherhood, and vented against him a series of fierce invectives, of which the following is a fair sample:—

Oh, what a fine young king is this
  Who does as his father bids him—
Who, kissing hand, at word of command,
  Of land and revenue rids him!

Possessed of heart, ere doing this thing
  You would have made food for ravens.
Yes, you are every inch a king;
  But it is the King of Cravens!

'Tis kingly thus your realm to concede
Unto a younger brother!
'Tis also a very royal deed
To live on the wealth of another!

Dost think a prince can gain new friends,
The old ones thus befooling?
Or that who youth in pastime spends
Best fits himself for ruling?

Assailed in this way, the impulsive Plantagenet was soon again seduced into rebellion. The second son of the English King, Richard, then known as Count of Poitou, was now on the side of his father. He, too, had been the intimate of Bertrand, and his brother in arms and song, the former being known as Ou, and the latter as Oc. He, too, had been the tool of the wily mountaineers; and he, therefore, the strongest in brain as in arm and heart of all his father's sons, knew right well that the prime enemy of his house was Von Born. Him, therefore, the Lion-hearted selected from the rebel group, hunted from the field to his stronghold, and captured therein after a gallant defence. The surrender was unconditional, and Richard fully intended to destroy the arch-disturber. But the singular ability of the latter was never so conspicuously powerful as in extremity. It mastered everything without the head that contained it, chiefly because it could master all within. Every passion of its owner, every prejudice, every habit, every superstition, every principle, every hate, every love, every powerful impulse was the docile slave of this intellect. Von Born was thoroughly acquainted with the proud and fierce, yet generous and impulsive, character of Richard, and he adapted himself thereto with consummate dexterity. The mixture of dignity and humility which the prisoner displayed

before his conqueror, and the words of flattery which he knew so well how to mould, completely softened the conqueror, and Bertrand was granted life and liberty. His lands and his castle, indeed, were confiscated, but these he quickly regained by a course of artful conduct, recorded by such odes as this :—

I have suffered many losses, but still have heart to sing ;
My castle I've surrendered, but it is unto a king.
I bowed and sued for grace when before him I was led ;
He pardoned and embraced, and I've nothing more to dread.
Ye barons who abandoned me, though swearing to be true,
Ye cannot blame me when in turn I now abandon you.
If Richard will accept the gift, myself to him I'll bind,
With single heart and faith as pure as silver thrice refined.
His rank will cause him to be like the sea that seems to take
Whate'er is given it, on the shore again to cast it back.
It well befits so great a prince as Richard to restore
What he has taken to the knight who humbles him before.
At least I beg that he will deign the wardship of his castle
To trust to who will keep it best, his now repentant vassal.
For if he leave it as to-day to my relentless foes,
No peace can he expect, for we will ever be at blows.
Nor need he fear that such an act will cause him to be twitted
That, like an idiot, he allowed himself to be outwitted.
Aye ready shall I be to serve and yield him honour due—
A thing, perhaps, I had not done, if they had been but true.

The remembrance of his peril and of Richard's lenity effected no change on the troubadour. He was still the same turbulent dare-devil, still the same prime mover of confusion, still the same unscrupulous, intriguing, violent baron as ever. Soon afterwards he drew down upon his head the personal vengeance of the terrible Henry II.—a man, whose ability was equal to that of the First William, and who would have been as great a monarch and as mighty a victor, but for his unbridled passions. Bursting forth and sweeping him headlong before their rush at the most critical seasons, these

passions never failed to neutralize the deepest-laid plans of the English king, and to render unavailing all his valour and indefatigability. Having besieged and captured Von Born, as his son had done before him, "the captive was led to the tent of his powerful enemy," writes Thierry. "Before he pronounced the *væ victis*, Henry was desirous of tasting a little of the luxury of revenge by deriding the man once so formidable, and who had boasted that he feared not even a king. 'Bertrand,' said the sovereign, 'thou wert wont to say that never hadst thou found an occasion that demanded the exercise of more than half thy brain. But a time has now come when even the whole of it will hardly serve thy turn.' 'My lord,' replied the Southern noble, with the confidence arising from the consciousness of intellectual superiority, 'it is true that I said so, and I said the truth.' 'Still, I think,' sneered the king, 'that thy head has failed thee for once.' 'I admit it, sire,' replied Von Born, 'and well it may. It has never recovered from the shock it received on the day that the valiant young king, thy son, ceased to breathe.' At this unexpected mention of his son the King of England burst into tears, and fainted. When he recovered he was another man. All vengeful thoughts had passed away, and he saw only in Bertrand the ancient and cherished friend of the child whose loss he so deeply lamented. Instead of the reproaches and the capital sentence which the prisoner had reason to expect, the king addressed him thus:—'Sir Bertrand, Sir Bertrand, thou hadst good cause to lose thy wits for the sake of my son. Thou wert dearer to him than any other man in the world. For his sake I give thee thy life and restore thee thy castle. I restore thee also my friendship and my favour; and I grant thee five hundred

marks to make good the injury that thou hast suffered in this war.'" The deed was creditable to Henry. It was exaggerated, indeed, and the result of exaggerated sentiment. But the twelfth century was an age of extremes, and the Plantagenets were always more extreme, for good or for evil, than their contemporaries. To our thinking Von Born hardly merited such treatment. He might have regretted the death which the old king felt so keenly; but we greatly doubt it. The ode in which he pretended to bewail the event bears not the slightest trace of real feeling. Here it is:—

The noblest prince that ever trod the earth,
The prince whose heart was worthy of his birth,
Lies low within the grave.
No more he'll ride the tilt or draw the sword;
Honour and courtesy have lost their lord,
Their worthiest chief the brave.

Ah, death, thou mightest have found another prey!
Wretches enough there were to speed away;
But know, 'tis past thy might
From loving breasts to cast his mem'ry forth,
Or us forbid to imitate the worth
Of him—the model knight.

Thou who didst die our sinful race to save—
Thee I implore for him, the good and brave,
That of thy boundless grace
Thou wouldst imparadise him, not with churls,
But 'mid the honoured band of lords, and earls,
And princes give him place!

It will be observed that Von Born's idea of heaven was not unlike that expressed by Michael Cassio:

CASSIO. For my own part—no offence to the general or to any man of quality—I hope to be saved.

IAGO. And I too, lieutenant.

CASSIO. Ay, but by your leave not before me; the lieutenant is to be saved before the ancient.

Von Born remained the same man for long years; always leading a faction, always engaged in feuds, and always venting his animosity against those who withstood him, in diatribes as coarse as they were fierce. Thus, for instance, he dealt with Alfonso of Aragon:—

To quarrel with Amfos, the King, was not my wish, I swear;
But he's so faithless, sordid, vile, that I cannot forbear.
In censure all men speak of him and his insatiate greed.
His vices must be well chastised, and I will do the deed.

I'll tell you of a trick of his, as it was told to me
By one who saw it: you will judge if baser aught could be.
A knight invited him to feast, and as a guest he came,
Was thus received into the house, and then—O deed of shame!—
He seized his unsuspecting host and turned him out of door.
The lands thus vilely gained he keeps, nor will he them restore.

He sent a band to aid Castile against the Moorish curs;
"A knightly deed," you'll say; but wait until I close my verse.
Of these good knights, in various fights, were fifty captives made;
To Amfos the Castilian King a sum for ransom paid.
But he, the mean one! kept the coin to waste with dice and wine,
And left within the Moorish cells his gallant knights to pine!

If you have money in your purse, beware of this fine king!
For if he fancies that you're rich he'll come a borrowing.
He'll cringe and flatter till you lend; but look for payment—then
He'll pay as paid the cat the owl, or as the fox the hen!

A worthy knight, the other day, as men of credit tell,
Was jeered at by some wretched clowns, and cudgelled them right well.
His blood was up, his arm was strong, and one of them he slew—
A catiff hound, a cheating knave, a misbegotten Jew!
The tribes unto King Amfos hied, and loud complaint preferred,
And, as they weighted it with gold, the plaint the monarch heard.

Then surely had the knight been fined or fast in prison set;
But woe for him it happened that the king was in his debt.
The latter saw an easy way whereby to pay the bill—
Unto the Jews he gave the knight on him to work their will!

Away the dogs their victim bore ; beneath their hands he died ;
'Twas thus King Amfos paid a debt, and gained some cash beside.
A sage foretold that he would prove a coward and a knave,
Nor ever do a gen'rous deed from cradle unto grave.
By friend and foe and knight and cit and serf it is confest
That, the prediction to fulfil, King Amfos does his best.

At length came the decay of body and bodily passion, while the intellect and its desires remained as strong as ever. The consequences were a living hell to a man like him. To escape it he was compelled to choose between suicide and the cloister. He adopted the latter, closing his life as a monk in the Abbey of Coteaux. He left a son who lacked nothing but opportunity to have equalled the evil renown of his sire, as the following servente, satirizing King John, attests :—

I'll tell him of his fathers,
  I'll tell him of their fame ;
The fights they fought, the deeds they wrought,
The tasks to glorious ends they brought
  Shall cover him with shame.

Guienne laments King Richard,
  The gen'rous and the bold,
Who, to defend his heritage,
Shrank not a mighty war to wage,
  And spared nor blood nor gold.

But more does Guienne mourn
  The reign of coward John—
He who prefers a hawk or hound
To all the leagues of fertile ground
  By valiant Richard won.

For John loves not the battle ;
  He's neither king nor knight ;
He shrinks himself to draw the blade,
And—deeper shame—he will not aid
  The chiefs who dare to fight !

For ever vanquished in the war,
For aye in peace befooled;
'Tis but too plain that rules the cur
Where once the lion ruled.

But, though the darkest fate befall,
The poet cannot hope to call
A blush into his cheeks.
Abandoned still to crime and lust,
He lets his honour in the dust
Be trampled, like a mouldy crust,
Nor heeds when censure speaks!

Nowhere in his awful poem is the imagination of Dante more strikingly and justly terrific than in the doom which he assigns to the elder Von Born:—

I' vidi certo, ed ancor par ch'io 'l veggia,
Un busto senza capo andar sì come
Andavan gli altri della trista greggia.
E'l capo tronco tenea per le chiome.
Pesol con mano a guisa di lanterna,
E quei mirava noi, e dicea: O me!
Di sè faceva a sè stesso lucerna.

Nor do we consider these lines merely imaginative. In the course of our experience we have had occasion to observe, and that repeatedly, that the wicked man is invariably punished, even on earth, through that thing in which he most delights, or in which he takes the greatest pride.

The other barons of the March—the Dauphin of Auvergne, the Viscounts of Limoges, Ventadour, Comborn, &c., to the end of their days played much the same part as Von Born—in inferior form, however, as befitted their inferiority of character. They fought, sometimes for their natural chief, Richard of England, and sometimes against him. And he, a true child of the Langue d'Oc, never hesitated to exchange with

them either blows or ballads. In the poetical contest, however, he was always beaten. He was one of those who are not born poets, and who cannot be moulded into any resemblance of the sterling article. He was too honest to put his name to the compositions of others; and his own verses are simply contemptible. Of these verses the following are favourable specimens:

Now, County Guy, let it be told,
And you, Sir Dauphin, own,
Where is the valour that of old
In count and dauphin shone?

You plighted faith; with me you swore
As firm to stand as rocks.
You keep your faith for ever more
As does the wolf or fox.

Yet why should that cause me to start,
Or in amazement stare?
*Foxes you well may be in heart,*
*Since you are such in hair.*

Why did you fail to bring me aid?
What made your blood so cold?
Were you afraid of not being paid,
Or that I had no gold?

Truly a noble choice you make!
King Philip--heaven him save!—
His word was never known to break!
And then he's rich and brave!

While I am faithless, sordid, poor,
And fear in war to ride.
It must have been the contrast, sure,
That caused you to change side.

Richard was frank and open, and, his paroxysms of temper aside, full of magnanimity. As much cannot be said of the border troubadours. They were brave, indeed, and brilliant, and very capable of generous

deeds; but they were also unscrupulous and treacherous, as history abundantly shows; and, when interest or vengeance dictated the crime, they shrank not from assassination. In 1183 a number of them made a dastardly attempt to slay Henry II. during a parley. They inveigled him within range of one of their strongholds, and then greeted him with a flight of arrows, one of which pierced his doublet, while another slew a knight by his side. The full atrocity of the deed can only be appreciated by those who are acquainted with the warlike usages of the era. These usages allowed the vassal to resist his sovereign in the field on receiving due provocation; but they forbade him to raise his hand against the person of that sovereign, even in the fury of the battle. In war, as well as in peace, all good knights were taught to regard that person as a sacred thing. No monarch was ever more hated by his subjects than John; and yet the barons whom he was hunting vindictively and relentlessly to destruction, obeying what they considered duty, repeatedly withheld the death-stroke which their followers were aiming at the breast of the tyrant. These remarks will apply to the slaughter of King Richard before Chalus—a siege into which it is our opinion that he was deliberately provoked with a view to the catastrophe which followed.

We close our remarks on the knightly troubadours with one of their canzons:—

> From me a canzon mayst thou claim,
> Thou thing whose whole's unknown to fame,
> Whose half's exposed to sneer and scorn—
> My tried and trusty bugle-horn.
>
> As much, I'm sure, it merits song
> As sword so sharp or spear so long;
> Confined to fight their uses are,
> While it is good in peace and war.

It has a note to cheer the fray,
To urge the dogs upon the prey;
And one to reach my lady's ear,
Whisp'ring, "The hour of tryst is near."

Then I can use it as a cup;
Thus, with a cork, I close it up,
And, filling to the brim with wine,
Kiss, as I quaff, this horn of mine.

THE

# INFLUENCE OF THE TROUBADOURS

THE influence exercised by the troubadours can hardly be exaggerated. By means of their lyrics they swayed the minds of their countrymen, from the sovereign princes downwards, nearly at will. Their opposition was death, their favour the breath of life, to the institutions of their country. There was nothing, however excellent, that could resist their ridicule and invective; and there was nothing, no matter how pernicious, to which their approving songs could not give perpetuity. Nor was their influence limited to their own age or country. When they were in their prime, all Christendom delighted to imitate them. The practice of Provençal manners, the cultivation of Provençal sentiments, and the knowledge of the Provençal language were the essentials of a polite education. The Langue d'Oc was the school of the middle ages. Germany, France, Italy, and even England were the pupils of its airy wit and fastidious elegance. Nor when it declined into the mere dull province of a great kingdom was its influence destroyed. The gentlemen and the poets of the neighbouring lands continued to display the polish, and to sing the songs which the troubadours had taught them.

The troubadours were authorities in all matters of taste and etiquette. They prepared the youth of both sexes for society, and they drew up rules for their guidance therein. It was thus that Amanieu des Escas instructed the young man of rank while he was yet a page or squire:—"Shun the companionship of fools, impertinents, or meddlers, lest you pass for the same. Never indulge in buffoonery, scandal, deceit, or falsehood. Be frank, generous, and brave; be obliging and kind; study neatness in your dress, and let elegance of fashion make up for plainness of material. Never allow a seam to remain ripped and gaping; it is worse than a rent: the first shows ill-breeding; the last only poverty, which is by far the lesser evil of the two. There is no great merit in dressing well if you have the means; but a display of neatness and taste on a small income is a sure token of superiority of spirit. You must have a mistress; that is essential to your position as a gentleman; but be true to her, and make no boast of her favours. To perfect your manners, you must go to court; that is the true seminary of politeness: there weak minds are strengthened and strong minds perfected. If you take service, let it be with a man of worth and liberality. Study to please him without bending to his worse qualities. Show no jealousy of those around him; it is not only mean, but dangerous. He has a right to distribute his favours and his bounty as he pleases. Have your arms, &c., always ready for use. Be first up in the morning, and, when called upon, first also in the saddle. In the tourney, do not fail to display all your dexterity and valour."

The same troubadour is equally minute in his directions to the young lady in waiting. He recommends her to rise early, so that her mistress may find her ready

dressed when she summons her. In dressing, he makes one recommendation which we should hardly think necessary, and another absolutely vicious. He desires her first to wash her hands, her arms, and her neck, and to lace herself *very tightly*. The next direction also must sound rather strange in modern ears—that the nails should not be worn so long as to allow any black to appear therein. But, remembering a certain proverbial expression common in the last generation and in the generations preceding, we must admit that this rule was not uncalled for. Our mentor proceeds with the remark that the mediæval young lady should be particularly careful of her head, for this very troubadour-like reason, that what is most exposed to observation should receive the most attention. "Clean your teeth every morning," he adds. "Do all these things before any person can see you, and do not neglect to look in the mirror; it will be of service in aiding you to perceive and rectify any portion of your attire that may not be quite in order. Have everything ready for your mistress before she rises, so that she may not have to wait; but do not enter her chamber until she is alone, or shall summon you. Before she quits her bed hand her needles and thread, a comb, and whatever else she may require to arrange her hair and her head-dress"—a direction which seems to indicate that the streaming ribbons with which the beauties of that period were accustomed to deck their tresses, were sewn in their places. "When she is dressed, hold the mirror, that she may see whether every lace, &c., is in its proper position. Afterwards you will procure her cool and fresh water to wash her face, not forgetting to hand her a towel. Then it will be your duty to examine that there is nothing omitted, misplaced, or awry." Here we may remark that a trouba-

dour was fully competent to give instructions on all such points, since, as cavalier servente, he was accorded the right of being present at the toilet of his mistress, and must, therefore, have had full opportunity of acquainting himself with all its mysteries. Amanieu des Escas continues to instruct the waiting-woman for getting through the day. After leaving her mistress she might "go down to the hall, saluting everybody, and replying with courtesy to their inquiries, but by no means in superfluous words. "When you go to hear mass," he continues, "be modest and sedate. Do not let your eyes rove about; turn them rather to the ground, or, better still, towards the altar, and avoid whispering. On leaving church, should anyone attempt to engage you in conversation, you may gratify them, but without noise or dispute, for nothing is more unseemly in a damsel than a boisterous tone. People say, too, that it is hardly decent to wear a petticoat, or other garment, in which there are stitches broken. The slightest excess in wine ruins a lady beyond recovery; at meal-times, then, be careful not to drink it undiluted. Press no one to eat; it is ill-breeding. Carve what is before you; the guests will be uncourteous if they do not share the trouble with you. After the repast, when your lady has washed her hands and rinsed her mouth, you may do the same—there is nothing more healthful. But if you go aside to wash, be sure to have companions, lest ill-natured people should make remarks. At table take your place near your lady, leaving two seats between her and yourself. Give a gentle answer to him who seeks your love. By treating everyone courteously you will make no foes. You will find many ways of ridding yourself of disagreeable suitors without insulting them. Wealth and good looks should not direct

your choice; both are dangerous, unaccompanied by merit. Prefer an amiable man of honourable family. Tolerate no liberties, and have but a single lover. Sighs and messages will assail you, but heed them not. Be sure that the lover who employs an emissary is worthless. He who is loyal will entrust his secrets to none." So much for the spinster. When the lady had attained a fixed position by marriage she was to be guided by the rules and decisions of the Courts of Love. These regulations applied equally to the gentleman. But as he had many relations which they did not include, supplementary rules were necessary. And the more essential of these, as drawn up by that Provençal Chesterfield, Arnaud of Marsans, we shall give in the next paragraph:—

"Be always neat and elegant in your dress, no matter what the material," says Arnaud of Marsans. "See that your linen be fine and white, and that your shoes, stockings, doublet, &c., be well fitting, so that everyone may admire them. Let your gown, if you wear one, be rather short than long. It should be wide enough in front to cover the breast. Let your mantle be of the same stuff as your gown, and let the girdle and clasp be properly arranged. A gentleman should be particularly careful of his hair. It should be frequently washed, and it is better to wear it short than long. If the beard and moustache be allowed to grow, they become ungainly. It would be better to have them too short, were it not that all excess is to be avoided. Be careful how you carry your hands and use your eyes; do not stare rudely, nor let your fingers dangle or move about awkwardly. If you see anything with another that attracts your attention, do not be guilty of the rudeness of taking it out of his hands."

Having instructed the knight in matters of dress and deportment, Arnaud of Marsans deals with his duties as the master of a house:—

"At home be magnificent. Keep many squires—two especially, who shall always be in attendance on yourself. Be careful that

the latter are pleasing in person and address. It will suffice if the others are discreet and know how to converse with ease, so that you may send them anywhere without fearing that they will make themselves and you ridiculous, or cause anybody to say 'like master, like man.' When you have company, be kind to all. Invite them to make themselves at home; see that they be well served, and set them an example of good humour and ease. You will have few friends if you are illiberal or inhospitable. Never eat alone; nothing is so clownish."

And yet this clownishness must have been sufficiently common, or it would not have met with the reprobation of our authority. He, indeed, is not the only one who mentions, in order to censure, this particular trick. Raymond Gaucelen of Beziers lamented that there were many who shut themselves up to eat alone, concealing themselves more carefully at meal-times than certain birds concealed their stores of food:—

"Sit with your guests," recommends the troubadour of Marsans. "Be attentive yourself, and see that your servants are the same. Maintain a cheerful fire, and be sure that you do not allow your servants to whisper to you. Nor should you whisper to them; it looks mean. To avoid this, let all your directions be given before you sit down to table. See that the horses and servants of your guests are properly attended to, otherwise you will hear complaints that will cause you to blush. Do not lock your gates, nor maintain thereat porters armed with cudgels to repel grooms, pages, and jongleurs. Be the last to rise from table. Keep open house to all the world, and be ready to receive all comers, no matter what the hour. *Play high; it is honourable; and play long.* Bear your losses and your gains with the like equanimity. In short, spend your revenues in hospitality."

So much for the knight as a housekeeper. Afterwards Arnaud de Marsans gives him instructions for his guidance in various other circumstances:—

"Be always well mounted. Let a charger, swift of foot and easy to manage, be always led in your train. Your arms should be costly and well kept, and your shield, lance, and cuirass of good proof. Look well to the trappings of your horse; the saddle and

crupper should be of the same colour, so should your shield and the streamer of your lance. Have a horse to carry your baggage; thus you will never be taken at a short, but always be found ready for war or tilt—always ready to take advantage of an opportunity for gaining honour and renown, and for recommending yourself to the ladies. In war be ever vigilant. Make it a point of honour to be foremost in the onset, and last in the retreat. At the tournament be provided with several spears and helms. Have your horse garnished with bells; the sound inspirits the animal and his rider, and terrifies the foe. Never return from the lists without an encounter. When your lance fails you, draw your sword and strike till the clatter startle hell and heaven!"

Other troubadours anticipated or repeated the instructions of Arnaud de Marsans, and occasionally added thereto. Arnaud of Marveil says: "The merit of a knight consists in being well armed and mounted, in wielding his weapons and managing his horse with dexterity, in conducting an armed band with judgment, in charging with courage, in presenting himself gracefully at court, and in rendering himself agreeable to all." Bertrand Von Born says: "The first laws of honour are to make war, to tilt at Advent and Easter, and to enrich one's mistress with the spoils of the vanquished." In another place the same troubadour implies what a gentleman ought to be, while denouncing certain things as ungentlemanly. "I cannot endure a noble who is illiberal and ungracious, who makes unfounded accusations, who will not repay the favours he has received, who knows not how to hunt or hawk, and who is undistinguished in love or war."

So far and so minutely did the troubadours instruct their contemporaries as to dress and behaviour in society. As teachers of principles they were much less comprehensive, seldom extending their precepts beyond superficial accomplishments and qualities almost as superficial. "Count of Toulouse," says Guy of

Cavaillon, "if you wish to be prized, be loyal, liberal, and magnificent; bestow splendid gifts on friends and strangers; be always ready to give, and always reluctant to refuse; persecute your enemies, and favour your friends." "I love good friends, good cheer, and handsome presents," said the Monk of Montaudun; "I hate parsimony, a friend who fails me in the day of need, the man who speaks evil of dice, and the sorry fellow who refuses to play." "The base soul," says Guilhem, of Agoult, "is careless of renown." "It is a reproach and a shame to change one's mind lightly," says Nat de Mons. Ogier laments the Viscount of Beziers as "the good, the brave, the courteous, the most valiant and the best of knights." And Raimond de Durfort regrets that the *sous* of his friend were not all *crowns*, since he was just the man to enrich those who suffered by the rapacity of others. We could multiply such quotations to any extent. Thus the troubadours inculcated love of glory, perilous enterprise, and pleasure; magnificent habits, boundless liberality, profuse hospitality, and deep play; fidelity to one's word, the pursuit of revenge and gallantry, but hardly anything else. These were virtues in their eyes—almost the only ones, but certainly those that were indispensable. Through all their poems we hardly ever meet with a sentiment truly heroic. They never pause to preach patriotism, or self-denial, or a really virtuous principle. There is no such thing among them as recommending the pursuit of good for its own sake. As for what may be termed wisdom, their teachings therein are confined to the utterance of prudential commonplaces in a hesitating, half-hearted way. "Everyone" says Gancelm Faudit, "ought to be prudent in his pleasures; taking care, however, to guard himself from falling into niggardly habits. One should always try to

do good according to one's capacity. He who attempts to live altogether without restraint must not expect to be long or widely renowned. Regularity of conduct is that from whence good report springs. He whose heart is large to give ought to consider well from whence he is to procure the means of gratifying his inclination; but I do not say that a man ought to abstain from giving. There is much trouble in accumulating wealth; but the great difficulty lies in keeping it when it is accumulated. He who loses what he has by his folly, knows not where to look for more. Without sense and prudence there is neither worth nor esteem. All things have their places: there is a place to speak and a place to be silent, a place to give and a place to withhold, a place for wisdom and a place for folly. He who values his reputation will be neither a fool nor a prater; he will not reveal that which ought to be concealed, nor attempt to conceal that which ought to be known. He is a fool who sings all his verses, a fool who trusts a fool, a fool who is not chastised when he is in fault, and the greatest of fools who follows all his inclinations." Beyond this kind of thing—the worthless morality of the proverb which everybody quotes and nobody follows, and which is dinned in one's ears until it ceases to mean anything—the teachers of Provence never ventured in the path of wisdom.

The character of the Provençals, their dislikes and their preferences, dictated the sentiments of people so dependent in popularity as the troubadours. The latter flattered the foibles of those to whom they sang, and thus developed the aristocracy of Provence into a race of perhaps the most reckless, restless, brilliant profligates that ever the world saw—a race ready to risk every thing to destroy a foe or please a mistress—whom

a sarcasm could urge to mortal combat, whose fiercest mood a panegyric could reduce to amiability, whose sternest resolution evaporated before an epigram, whose loftiest motive was glory, who were incapable of comprehending the little word duty, whose life was a round of sensuality, and whose closing scene was the triumph of superstition. To the numerous anecdotes illustrative of these remarks which we have scattered through our pages we append the following, perhaps the most characteristic of any. In 1176 the Counts of Provence and Toulouse met at Beaucire, in order to conclude a treaty of peace. Each prince was attended by a brilliant train of nobles, who spent the period of meeting in attempts to outshine one another in splendour and profusion. More even than the scene of meeting between Henry VIII. and Francis I. did the scene of this one deserve to be termed "the Field of the Cloth of Gold." Horses were shod with silver, valets clad in the richest attire, and dogs deco rated with jewelled collars. As to the feasting, every evening beheld a banquet which Heliogabalus would have delighted to share, and Petronius to describe. Tournament followed tournament, each surpassing its predecessor in sumptuousness. The one closing the interview between the princes was marked by unheard-of prodigality. "I," said the lord of Siminiane, "will prepare the lists." He did so by yoking twelve pairs of white oxen to a plough and breaking up the ground. Afterwards he caused the space to be sown with thirty thousand golden crowns. "I," said the lord of Agoult, "will provide the prizes," which he did to the value of a hundred thousand crowns. "I," said Guilhem de Martello, "will prepare the feast." He kept his word, loading the tables w'th magnificent plate and the rarest viands cooked over the flame of wax

tapers, and at the close each guest was presented with the plate that he had used. "Now," said another worthy, Raymond of Venous, "I will treat you to such a spectacle as you never saw before." In the centre of the tilting-ground he caused thirty stakes to be planted, and to these stakes his servants fastened thirty noble horses, each superbly caparisoned. In the midst of the circle was placed the armour, weapons, and other equipments of thirty men-at-arms. The value of the whole surpassed even the cost of Martello's supper. Then the lord of Venous, causing a great quantity of wood to be heaped over the armour and round the horses, fired the enormous pile and destroyed the whole!

The religion of the Langue d'Oc was greatly modified by the Provençal character. There, as will be seen in our sketches of Gancelm Faudit and Guilhem of St. Legier, a pilgrimage was in most instances a promenade of gallantry, and a shrine a place of assignation; and even in those pilgrimages wherein devotion was the real object, that devotion was still of an amorous character. Near Marseilles, at Les Baumes, high up among woods and rocks, was a grotto, in which it was said that the Eastern penitent, Mary Magdalen, had spent the last seventeen years of her life. The legend was evidently without base. In modern times the most strenuous advocate of such things among the educated admit that tradition confounded a recluse of Provençal descent with the sister of Lazarus. During the middle ages, however, good Catholics never dreamt of doubting the story. The grotto, through which runs a stream said to have originated in Mary's tears, contained a chapel, lately restored, and was honoured with a devotion that extended far beyond the limits of the Langue d'Oc. Among the pilgrims to the shrine are numbered three queens and

thirteen kings of France, all the counts of Provence, "many popes, and an infinity of princes, dukes, and barons." By far the most interesting pilgrims were those of love. A stroll barefoot along the rocky ways that led to the recess, was a favourite penance inflicted on certain offenders. But fully as often the penance was self-imposed. It was believed that a pilgrimage to this particular shrine, accompanied by a fitting offering and a proper amount of prayer, was the best of all remedies for slighted affection, since the sympathizing saint invariably cleared the heart of passion and sent it home rejoicing. At Poictiers, near the other extremity of the Langue d'Oc, there was a similar, but even more singular, shrine. The story of its origin is this:—A youth of tender conscience, giving way to temptation, took his frailty so much to heart that he pined to death. From his grave sprang a rose-tree, bearing a few discoloured, pining blossoms, and a great many thorns. The circumstance attracting much attention, the grave of the youth was opened and his body examined. In the mouth was found a billet, inscribed with the word "Marie." The thing was proclaimed a miracle, and the body removed to a grave excavated near the altar of the Virgin. Over this grave was erected a monument, consisting of a pillar supporting a rose-bush, in the centre of which lay a heart. Thither unhappy lovers were accustomed to travel on pilgrimage, in order to obtain relief. The place, it is stated, was never for a moment vacant. A visitor was always to be seen clasping the pillar with both arms, and preferring a petition for relief with abundance of tears, while many other visitors waited with manifest impatience, their turn to go through the same form.

Indeed, wherever the eye rested in mediæval Provence,

it was sure to distinguish tokens of the influence of the troubadours and their songs. Nothing can be more prosaic than the by-laws, regulations, &c., inscribed over our toll-gates; but in Provence, at the period of which we write, even such things as these were characteristic of the people. Such dues as the following were regularly exacted by the custodians of ferries, bridges, &c.:—"Buffoons, mimics, dancers, and minstrels shall play before the lady of the manor." "A tumbril carrying rogues to trial or punishment, shall pay a cord of the value of six deniers." "A pilgrim shall sing his romance to a new tune, and in return he shall receive a bed of fresh straw, should he think proper to pass the night in the manor." Concerning this item we may be allowed to remark that, considering the number of pilgrims who were always a-foot, such a thing as "a new tune" could not have been of very easy attainment, and that, in consequence, the pilgrim ran considerable risk of losing his passage and his bed of fresh straw, if the toll-taker happened to be in a surly mood. "A footman (booted or not), mendicant or vagabond, shall have free lodging, provided he make four sommersaults." "A Moor shall cast his turban into the air and pay down five sols, full weight, at the door of the chateau." "A Jew shall put his shoes on his head, and say, 'will he, nill he,' one *pater* in the patois of the country." "An exhibitor of bears or monkeys shall make the animals dance to the sound of the flageolet." And there were many other items fully as curious as any of those we have quoted.

Very illustrative of the influence possessed in their day by the troubadours, are the customs which prevailed at Aix down to the last century, and which, perhaps, have not wholly disappeared even yet. Aix, it may be

observed, more than any other Provençal town, might be expected to present such remnants of the age of song. It was the favourite dwelling-place of the Counts of Provence, and, therefore, a principal haunt of the troubadours. It was also the residence of that enthusiastic admirer of everything that was old and chivalrous, René of Anjou. And it may be presumed—indeed, the thing is capable of proof—that the "good king" did his best, and not without a certain amount of success, to re-establish those usages which, even in his day, were already somewhat quaint and unfashionable. The municipality of Aix retained in its service "a master poet and four apprentices, who were called the Mamons."

Every New Year's Day each of these mamons received a scarlet robe, a yellow bonnet, and a gay cockade, in addition to his stipend. One of their duties was to make odes, and recite them, in praise of the town, at certain festivals. But they were far less laureates than censors, being expected to denounce, without fear or favour, all signal displays of pride, vanity, cunning, or immorality, confirmed cases of hypocrisy, mésalliances, &c. The diatribe was always delivered in the presence of the culprit, and there was no such thing as shunning it. When there was a culprit to be dealt with, the poets put their heads together and concocted the doggrel. This done, they donned their glaring attire, and, attended by the belman and sundry minstrels, marched off to the residence of the doomed individual. They mostly took the longest way, traversing the streets with solemn steps and slow. And as the citizens of Aix rather liked such things, they were sure to have a tolerable company in attendance. Nobody could refuse to admit them, under the heaviest penalties; nor was it safe to be out of the way. So the sufferer was mostly to be found at home,

with his best apartment prepared for the visitors. The apprentices began the business by strewing the chamber with brown flowers. This done, the whole band struck up the accusing song, adopting an air whose monotony was sure to allow every sentence to be heard with a distinctness, excruciating for, at least, one of the audience. Having reached the final stanza, always a stereotyped piece of advice not to be naughty again, the mamons bowed low to the company and withdrew. This delectable custom was religiously observed on all fair, and on a good many hardly fair, occasions, until, about a hundred and thirty years ago, a citizen becoming restive under the infliction, adopted measures that put an end to the mamons and their satires, to the vast regret of the lovers of all good old customs. "Since then," remarks M. de Villeneuve, in his Biography of King René, "fools and follies have decidedly increased in and about Aix."

Still more curious were the associations of Valentines which overspread the Langue d'Oc, and even appeared in many of the neighbouring countries. In our chapter on the Cavalier Servente, and *àpropos* of Guilhem of Cabestaing, we have given a sketch of the valentines in high life. There were similar guilds among the masses, and these, as they obtained at Aix, we shall now notice. On the first of May all the unmarried and disengaged lads of the place assembled in a meadow, and cast lots for the disengaged damsels of the neighbourhood, every one, female as well as male, being bound to accept the partner assigned by chance. The lad was to champion the lass against evil tongues, to aid her in her labours, to escort her to church on Sundays and holidays, and to present her with a bouquet containing ten different kinds of flowers, on the first day of every

month, a dove at Easter, and three cakes at Whitsuntide. When May Eve came round again, the lads planted what were called *Mais* under the windows of their valentines. These *Mais* were of two kinds. A branch of elder was employed if the planter wished to resume his liberty, and a branch of birch if he were satisfied with his choice and desired to perpetuate the engagement. In the latter case the branch was decorated with garlands of flowers and gay ribbons, and enclosed several birds of song. If the maiden accepted the offer thus made, she removed the May to her chamber; but if the offerer happened to be distasteful, she signified the unpleasant truth by leaving the May where it stood, sometimes emphasizing her refusal by placing a plate of walnuts beside it. It is said that there was a good deal of craft exercised on these occasions—that the maidens sometimes replaced the elder-branch with one of birch, not forgetting the walnuts, and that the youths resorted to similar contrivances—each desiring to throw the shame of being refused on the other.

We must not omit to notice the influence of the troubadours on history. Their romantic accounts of the prison adventures of Cœur de Lion, and of the doings of sundry kings, counts, princes, and emperors, are now no longer credited. But there was a time when such fables were taught and believed as true history. We have before us a treatise on the Duello (Venice, 1569), written in the sixteenth century, by a grave and judicious personage, Don Geronimo Urrea, Viceroy of Naples, councillor of Charles V. &c., &c. Therein is described how a certain Raymond Berenger, Count of Barcelona, made a journey in disguise into the heart of Germany, and how he encountered, and slew in single combat, the traducer of an empress, whose life depended

on the issue of the strife. All this is told exultingly as a fact, the deed and its doer being held up to the admiration of the generation for which Urrea wrote, as models than which nothing could be found more worthy of imitation. Modern criticism has exploded many of these fables, though not without much labour, and in the face of obstinate prejudice. But a sufficient number of them still remain, and are likely to remain for many a day to come, on the pages of history. One instance we shall mention: it is the story told of Queen Eleanor sucking the poison from the wound of Edward I.—a story which was and is told of many other heroines and heroes besides.

The influence of the troubadours on the literature of Europe generally has been great. As we have already remarked, all the popular forms of Italian poetry were borrowed from them. Nor were Italians less indebted to the Provençals in the matter of idea. Our experience has shown us that it would not be difficult to fill a good-sized volume with examples, in which the former have taken, not merely the sense, but the very words of the Provençals to themselves. It has formed no part of our plan to do this, otherwise we could have shown Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Tasso, to make no mention of lesser names, paraphrasing as extensively from the Provençals, as Spenser of "The Fairie Queene," and some other early English bards, paraphrased from the Italians. Of Petrarch Millot has remarked, with a good deal of audacity, that he borrowed one line from Arnaud Daniel, and that the latter was the only troubadour thus honoured. If the appropriation of a man's ideas be conferring honour on him, then we must say that Petrarch distributed a good deal of honour among the troubadours. We give one

instance out of many; much of the substance of the beautiful sonnet beginning :—

> Benedetto sia 'l giorno, e 'l mese, e 'l anno;
> (Blessed be the day, the month, the year ;)

and several of the lines, notably the one just quoted, have been borrowed from a canzon, attributed to Giraud of Borneil, in which the parallel passage opens thus :—

> Ben ai al temps, el jorn, e 'l an, e 'l mes.
> (Blessed be the season, the day, the year, the month).

The plagiarism is curious, and not the less so, since precisely the same benediction is repeated by Byron :—

> Ave Marie! Blessed be the hour!
> The time, the clime, the spot!
> *Don Juan*, iii., 102.

It is not improbable but that the plan of the "Divina Commedia" was suggested by the Provençals. In our illustrations of the servente, we have given a rough paraphrase of one in which the poet makes rather a daring visit to Paradise—a kind of thing not at all unusual with the troubadours and their contemporaries. Indeed, there yet remains a manuscript, written some time during the Pontificate of Alexander III., in which is related the vision of a certain Fra Alberico, of Montecassino, who is represented as having made—in the spirit—precisely the same round as Dante. To this vision may be traced not a few of the terrible ideas afterwards expressed by the father of Italian poetry. Ourselves think that Alberico was a phantom called up by the editors, and that the story was really borrowed from the Provençals, like many others of a different caste. So far has this borrowing been carried, that there is hardly one of the older Italian novelists, Boccaccio included, who cannot

be proved to have indulged therein, and in most instances largely. Of this we have pointed out many instances in the course of our work. Perhaps the strongest proof that could be given of our assertion, is contained in the remark which Ariosto places in the mouth of Rinaldo, when the nocchier proposes to relate the story "of Adonio and the valuable gift of a dog which he made to the wife of the judge." To this the paladin replies:—

> Il suono
> Non passa 'l Alpe, e qui tra voi rimane;
> Perche nè in Francia, nè dove ito sono
> Parlar n'udi ne le contrade estrane.
>
> *Orlando*, xliii. 71.

Ariosto could hardly have said as much of other stories told in the same poem. As to this particular one, we remember a remark once made respecting Raphael, to the effect that he might safely repudiate the title of a copyist, since he had taken care to destroy the original of his copy. Nor was similar destruction by any means impossible in the case of a Provençal story; for then, as now, the more important Provençal manuscripts were to be found in Italy. The importation of ultramontane ideas must have gone far indeed, when Ariosto thought it right to announce the Italian origin of his dog story. Nor is such importation denied by the Italian commentators, every one of whom goes to Provençal literature for materials.

That the Minnesängers were the imitators of the troubadours no impartial student can doubt. Such is the similarity of style between these rivals that the one or the other must have been copyists. That the troubadours preceded the Minnesängers by a long period, and were, therefore, the originals, is capable of

demonstration. While the lyrists of the "Fatherland" are unknown to history previous to the middle of the twelfth century—a date telling against their originality, as we shall show presently—the annalists give us glimpses of the troubadours at an earlier period. Glaber, narrating the marriage of King Robert to Constance of Aquitaine (1000), shows that the Provençals who followed the bride to Northern France, were not very different from the Provençals of later times. He speaks of their fickleness, their foppishness, and the mischievous influence which they quickly acquired over their new acquaintances. And, while telling how the French hastened to copy the dress and manners of their visitors, he proves sufficiently the superior refinement of the latter. Glaber closes with some verses, in which he is severe on the Provençals, thereby proving, as it seems to us, that the objects of his censure were already singers, and that he himself had fallen into the habit of imitation which he blames in the courtiers. It is probable that the troubadours were in song by the beginning of the eleventh century; but it is certain that such was the fact fifty years later. By the time last mentioned the Provençal language was formed, and one consummate master thereof, William, Count of Poitou, had taken up the lute; and from William's days forward the succession of troubadours was continuous. The prince we speak of was one of the earliest crusaders: nor was he the only troubadour, by many thousands, who fought against the Saracen. It was only in these wars that the Germans could be introduced to Proven al poetry; and, if this be admitted, then the middle of the twelfth century would be about the period when the Minnesängers would be likely to begin to produce successful imitations of the lyrics of the troubadours, Further, it

has been clearly shown that the Germans repeatedly translated the rhymes of the Provençals, while it has not been proved that the Provençals ever translated from the German. The poetry of the Langue d'Oc, indeed, does not present a single German feature. Nor can we remember an instance in which a troubadour, even of the most vagabond propensities, turned his steps towards the Rhine. Precisely the contrary is the fact in both cases. Many German songs are evidently of Provençal origin; and many a German knight imitated the Emperor Frederick, in visiting Provence and in making Provençal verses.

The Norman trouvieres were, unquestionably, the children of the troubadours—their first-born, it may be observed. The contiguity of Normandy to the Langue d'Oc, and the establishment of Norman princes in Poitou and Anjou, with the consequent freedom and facility of intercourse between the North and the South, caused the poetry of the two countries to assume a close resemblance at an early date. Nearly all the more popular legends and songs have their representatives in both literatures. And there are instances, as in the lays of Cœur de Lion, in which it is impossible to pronounce which of the two versions is the original.

We say not one word of the influence exercised by the troubadours over Spanish literature, simply because it would be impossible to give anything like an intelligible view of this influence, within the few pages that we could bestow thereon.

Ere we conclude, we may remark that, amid much evil, the troubadours did some good. They were the first real revolutionists of modern times. In their lives and in their songs they were a protest against the iron rigidity, the pride, and the exclusiveness of the feudal

system. They were the earliest assertors of the dignity of intellect. In their view, the poet, no matter what his birth, was the equal of the prince. And their system of gallantry, with all its vices, had this much good—that it allowed the man of genius to cope with the prince, and thus prepared the public mind for an extension of the rivalry.

With an imitation of one of their battle-songs, we close our sketches of the TROUBADOURS :—

March, march !—to rival the glory
Achieved in Cressy's fray ;
March, march !—to lengthen the story
Our sires began that day.
Ye look for the same good fruit on the scion
That grew on the parent tree ;
And are we not the cubs of the Lion,
Grown hoary in victory ?
Forward ! March, march !

March, march !—ye broad-breasted yeomen—
An English trumpet calls !
March, march !—to-day should our foemen
Look to weapons and walls.
Whate'er befall ere the strife be ended,
Yet shame awaits not our bands :
*'Defeat has shed on us fame more splendid*
*Than triumph on other lands.**
Forward ! March, march !

* This is the simple truth ; as, for instance, Talbot at Chatillon, the battle of Fontenoi, &c.

# *APPENDIX.*

## CODE OF LOVE.

1. Causa conjugii ab amore non est excusatio recta.
2. Qui non celat amare non potest.
3. Nemo duplici potest amore ligari.
4. Semper amorem minui vel crescere constat.
5. Non est sapidum quod amans ab invito sumit amante.
6. Masculus non solet nisi in plenâ pubertate amare.
7. Biennalis viduitas pro amante defuncto superstiti præscribitur amanti.
8. Nemo, sine rationis excessu, suo debet amore privari.
9. Amare nemo potest, nisi qui amoris suasione compellitur.
10. Amor semper ab avaritiæ consuevit domiciliis exulare.
11. Non decet amare quarum pudor est nuptias affectare.
12. Verus amans alterius nisi suæ coamantis ex affectu non cupit amplexus.
13. Amor raro consuevit durare vulgatus.
14. Facilis perceptio contemptibilem reddit amorem, difficilis eum carum facit haberi.
15. Omnis consuevit amans in coamantis aspectu pallescere.
16. In repentinâ coamantis visione, cor tremescit amantis.
17. Novus amor veterem compellit abire.
18. Probitas sola quemcumque dignum facit amore.
19. Si amor minuatur, cito deficit et raro convalescit.
20. Amorosus semper est timorosus.
21. Ex verâ zelotypiâ affectus semper crescit amandi.
22. De coamante suspicione perceptâ zelus interea et affectus crescit amandi.